The Renaissance of Jesus

GEORGE TOLOVER TOLSON

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The Renaissance of Jesus

By
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DEDICATED

TO

JESUS CHRIST, SON OF MAN, SON OF GOD

WHO, WHEN WE KNOW HIM, FIRST BRINGS

US TO OUR KNEES IN WORSHIP, THEN

STANDS US ON OUR FEET

IN LOVING SERVICE

OF

GOD AND MAN

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PREFACE

THERE is little in this volume which is really new except the manner in which the materials are assembled and arranged. The author is largely summarizing the work accomplished in recent times by students in various fields, and bringing the results together in order to set clearly before the reader's mind a situation which is exceedingly challenging.

The message which Jesus has for our age is of such urgency that nothing must be left in the way of its being thoroughly understood and fully appreciated. Traditionalism, biblicism, sacred institutions, cherished theories of the past, the thought-forms in which Christianity has become incarnated, the conceptions around which religious experiences have been entwined, are tenderly appreciated by the author; but in order the better to reveal Jesus and to make his message clear, these delicate matters must be and are devoutly but courageously considered. All things are counted but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus. For all too long, albeit unwittingly, we have followed lesser lights than Him who is the

Light of the World. It is urgent that we return to Jesus, whose way is the way out of confusion, uncertainty, and of impending demoralization for men, for nations, and for our civilization.

CHAPTER ONE

CHAPTER I

FROM THE HISTORICAL JESUS TO THE THEOLOGICAL CHRIST AND THE GOD OF WAR

1. Introduction

We are living in a most interesting time in the world's history. A standard of living has been achieved in America such as never has been known before. The advance in knowledge has been as notable. But this increase of knowledge and wealth and this zest and interest in life have brought with them a good deal which gives concern to the thoughtful mind. Wisdom has not increased as rapidly as knowledge. Appreciation has not kept pace with acquisition. Responsibility has lagged behind the achievement of power. The world has been made a neighborhood before we have had time to learn how to live neighborly. The *mores* of isolated barbarism have been continued in the institutions of complex civilized life; and, in general, the material has far outstripped the spiritual in the modern mad rush of life. Our materialistic civilization is topheavy and in the judgment of many has become unstable. Even keenly minded busi-

ness men like Roger Babson are telling their fellows that if they wish to retain what they have acquired they would better support the preachers and the churches.

In central Europe there are many prophets of despair, who see no way out of a bad situation. It is impossible to meet their arguments, and yet we cannot quite believe their prophecies. England is trying to be hopeful, and with increasing success. However, the thoughtful person anywhere must recognize that the times are crucial and that the next quarter-century is fraught with almost untold good or ill. Faith in God and in human nature gives assurance of the ultimate righting of the ship, but how long we may sail a troubled sea is a distressing query, and everything has been hazarded aboard ship. Not even the home or the church is too sacred to be exempt from the venture, and again "men's hearts are failing them for fear."

Simultaneously with this marvelous progress of science and this material development there has been taking place another movement which, while it is not so conspicuous, may be fraught with great redemptive power, if we will. It is sometimes called "The New Reformation," and, again, "The Back-to-Jesus Movement." The way has been preparing for this

movement for a century and a half, by an increasingly rigorous application of the scientific spirit to the study of religion. Until about a generation ago the results were almost totally negative. The Bible was found to be inaccurate scientifically and historically, and many parts of it faulty morally. From the "Mistakes of Moses" we passed on to the mistakes of Paul. Then Jesus was declared to be an invention of the mind of the second century to give flesh and blood to a pre-Christian Jesus myth. These studies, together with a rampant mechanistic theory of natural science, and also at last a mechanistic view of psychology, left the informed mind without much basis for intelligent faith.

Within the past quarter-century, or a little longer, two changes have taken place which are not short of revolutionary, and which have made the situation, in theory at least, one of challenging hope rather than one of distressing despair. The attitude of science has changed from dogmatic mechanism to an unwonted degree of open-mindedness, as Doctor Millikan has recently said. Indeed, not a few of the great leaders in the various sciences are finding evidences that lead them to faith. Biologists cannot longer ignore the evidences of purpose in evolution. Whitehead finds

God in "the principle of concretion," and Pupin finds him in "creative co-ordination" which makes for order out of chaos.

The other significant change, and one no less revolutionary, has been in theology, which, with notable exceptions that have no intellectual significance, is no longer at war with science, but looks to science not only for suggestions and illustrations, but also for the thought-processes with which to teach religion. Creation by evolution brings God into the world processes continually instead of placing him merely "in the beginning." The follower of Jesus now imitates him in condemning without hesitation that which is immoral or untrue in the Old Testament. In fact, the scientific spirit applied to the study of the Bible and the history of the church has resulted in the New Revelation of Jesus upon which the New Reformation is founded. Jesus has become both understood and appreciated as never before. In our generation for the first time in five hundred years it has become possible to harmonize science and theology without unduly compromising either; and for the first time in Christian history it has become understood that the principles of Jesus are really to be applied in all human relations, and that the world is a "subject of redemption" instead

of being fated for destruction. Possibly no more important and farreaching discoveries have been made in modern times than these.

Furthermore, the studies of the anthropologists, sociologists, and psychologists have revealed the fact that human nature not only can change, but that it has changed greatly during the course of history, as we shall explain more fully. It is claimed now that human nature is "one of the most modifiable things we know."

It has also been discovered that the changes from barbarism to civilization are in the direction of the principles of Jesus. The scientific sociologists have found that the principles which must be incorporated in modern society in order to preserve civilization and the spirit in which it is necessary to meet modern world problems are those which are found in the life and teachings of Jesus.

The battle for idealism is not fully won; but the situation is more favorable than at any time since the Renaissance period. The great gulf which seemed to be fixed between intelligence and faith for several centuries has been largely filled. It is possible now to be intelligently religious. Again the religious interpretation of the universe seems to be the most intelligent. The way would seem to be

cleared, at least for the discerning mind, for a great forward movement in religion. The greatest obstacle in the way of such a movement is doubtless the church itself in so far as it is controlled by mere tradition; and yet without the equipment which the church possesses the task would be difficult, if not impossible.

The welfare of the world and even the preservation of our civilization depend upon the response of our times to the challenge of this recovery of Jesus and his way of life. Teachers in the pulpit, classroom, and by means of the press must herald the gospel of Jesus and make his way of life known to the popular mind. For nothing will save our civilization short of the incorporation of the principles of Jesus in modern life by practical men in whose hands is the technique of education, industry, politics, and international and interracial statesmanship.

Too long has Jesus been less than half understood, and he has been far less than half believed. If Christianity can be converted into the religion of Jesus, if the church can be brought to believe Jesus' teachings, and if those in whose hands are the economic and political destinies of our times will incarnate Jesus into their affairs, we are saved. For this consummation the way seems open as never

before since the Renaissance period, when the schism between religion and culture began.

2. Why Jesus?

The writer was permitted recently to hear a discussion on the question, "Are the Teachings of Jesus Up to Date?" It was at a "Youth Conference." The place was one of the foremost cultural and religion centers of America. The young people were from the churches. Some of them possibly may have been college students; the majority were either high-school students or boys and girls engaged in various occupations. After allowing for their immaturity, their findings were significant. Some of the teachings of Jesus were declared not to be up to date. Nothing is said about the right of the woman to get a divorce, they decided, although one account grants the man that right on one ground. In this finding we recognize not only the revolt of youth but also the revolt of woman. The most significant thing was the fact that these young people assumed their right to sit in judgment on Jesus.

The youth of to-day are demanding reality as has no generation in the world's recorded history. They will leave nothing undone to find the truth. Evidently, the time has come

(possibly in some instances it is already too late) when the results of the investigations of biblical and historical scholars must be communicated to the younger generation in order to save their faith. The young people referred to were rejecting some of Jesus' teachings because they did not understand them, and because they had not been taught to distinguish between the teachings of Jesus and the ideals of the day attributed to him and the Paulinisms read back into the Gospels. Neither Jesus nor his teachings can be understood apart from a careful study of the Gospels both from the literary and historical standpoints. For the person who is not equipped with critical apparatus, it is far better, by frequent rapid reading of the Gospels, to catch the spirit of Jesus and judge not only the Old Testament and Paul's writings, but the materials of the Gospels themselves by the spirit of Jesus. Many of the youth of to-day and not a few adults refuse to accept Jesus as he has been represented in the traditional faith. If it is possible to present Jesus as he really was, there is every confidence that he will be appreciated and accepted. It is objected that it is impossible to know just who Jesus was, or what he taught; that when reference is made to him one does not know with precision what

is meant. Age-long prejudices too have gathered about him, both for and against him, so that neither to those in his favor nor to those against him is it possible to make any further very significant disclosures. "If he is not God, why follow him?" it is sometimes asked; and, again, if he is God, he is the despair, not the inspiring example, for us men. Furthermore, objection is made to authority, especially to the external sort which would be implied in totally submitting to Jesus.

A professor of religion in an American college, probably by way of discovering what the reaction would be, or possibly feeling his way on a matter which to him may not have been clear, recently remarked to a little group of students and alumni of a theological seminary that for a good number of reasons the main currents of spiritual life might not only have to flow around and not through the church, but possibly also around the person of Jesus as well. The response was startling. There was a considerable degree of assent to both propositions. And then a thing happened which one would suppose would have clarified the professor's mind. Those men, some of them mature, and all presumably quite independent in their thinking—men who, if any could, would surely be able to stand upon

their own foundations—began to suggest Emerson, Tagore, Gandhi, and Lincoln as the persons around whom to rally the forces of idealism. Evidently, the more mature of us are children still and need slogans, banners, personalities to symbolize for us life's deepest things, and to rally us to the battle.[1] If we must have someone to stand for God to us, whom else in all the world can it be but Jesus of Nazareth? To name any other not only seems almost sacrilege, but it is folly.

Again, there are those also who think that it is a matter of indifference whether Jesus ever lived at all. We have, they say, the teachings in the Gospels, some of which are very valuable. We should take what is good regardless of their source. It is thought that possibly the selection of the good from the bad or indifferent will be more independent, more with reference to their value, and that the selection will be the more judicious, if done without reference to any supposed authority, or even of presumption in their favor.

In reply, we suggest that many of the teachings recorded in the Gospels depend for their meaning upon their setting. In order to understand them we need to know all we can of their circumstance. This is, of course,

[1] See Graham Wallas, *Human Nature in Politics.*

the value of historical criticism. However, the crux of the matter is that it makes all the difference between fancy and reality whether some such character as Jesus actually lived. The most significant thing about the Gospel is that it has actually been lived. Long ago a few people declared that the navigation of the air was a possibility. Now it is a reality. Einstein in his study figured out some radically new ideas, and is reported as having said that to him it was a slight matter whether his theories were verified by observation. But most of us began to give credence to his revolutionary theories only when they had been proved by observations during an eclipse of the sun. Without some such character as Jesus, there would be an unreality about the most significant teachings in the Gospels which would largely nullify their practical value. It is the life of Jesus which gives significance to his teachings. *The Gospel consists more in the life than in the teachings of Jesus. It is he himself who is our inspiration, far more than his words.* It has made a great difference to the world that Jesus has lived, and it still makes a great difference to the world whether he lived, or whether the character presented in the Gospels is a creation of the imagination. If Jesus is a reality, our theory of the universe

must be large enough to include him. If Jesus really lived and was some such character as recorded, there is goodness at the heart of the universe.

One of the reasons why so few persons in history have undertaken to live as did Jesus is that he has been presented as an impossibility and so, of course, an unreality. An unreal Jesus became the despair rather than the inspiration of mankind. Constructive criticism of the Gospels has left not a less noble, inspiring and divine character, but one far more so, and in addition a Person who is real. As we shall see later, much perversion of religion has come by the neglect of the historical Jesus in the supposed interests of the theological Christ. Without the historical Jesus there is an unreality about Christianity and a suspicion that its high ideals are impracticable.

The objections to centering the Religion of Humanity around Jesus are not well founded. As we shall see later, we do know Jesus, and that as he has never been known before in the history of Christianity. And yet we do not know him so exactly, or what he taught with such precision, as to make of him our authoritative legislator in morals and religion, and so to convert the gospel into law. Furthermore, the new revelation of the humanity of Jesus,

which the church has always professed and as steadily forgotten, has made him once more our "truest, holiest manhood," the world's greatest inspiration.

Jesus is coming into his own. He is surely with us to stay. There is a rapidly growing world-wide appreciation of him. The Orient has discovered that Jesus may be had without "Christianity," some aspects of which they do not want, judging by some of its supposed samples. Testimonies are being received from distant lands through missionaries, but also through various nationals themselves, of increasing devotion to Jesus. "For the last five years I do not remember running across any educated Hindu . . . in whom I could detect hostility to Jesus—opposition to Christianity, yes; repudiation of Christendom, yes; but never opposition to Jesus Christ."[2] It is difficult for us not to suspect that these are exaggerations, and yet as no one else Jesus is bidding for the heart of the world. More and more is it being understood that in the religious realm he is without a peer. Surely, around him supremely will rally the idealism of the world. A. S. Woodburn, of Madras College,

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[2] W. E. S. Holland, at Detroit Student Volunteer Convention, 1928. See also E. Stanley Jones, *The Christ of the Indian Road.*

in an article in the Journal of Religion (January 1927, pp. 43ff.), declares that the Indian mind has succeeded in separating Jesus from the theological Christ of the West and evaluating him anew. It is found that the spirit of war and the spirit of Jesus are different; that Jesus is different from the traditional representation of him; that "Christians" and the real followers of Jesus are different. The Indian mind finds a fourfold appeal in Jesus: his God-consciousness, his freedom from social bondage and from Western race psychology, freedom from intellectual bondage and Indian demonology, and finally his complete selflessness.

To undertake to formulate some new religion freed from all the prejudices pro and con regarding Christianity, or to attempt to provide some ethical substitute for religion, would be very largely futile. Religions are long developments, and to undertake to break with the past is not only bad strategy, it is impossible. Any religion that would result from the process of rationally constructing a system for the saving of humanity would be sterile. The rational element in religion is one of the lesser factors. The influences of tradition, the effect of the grand and the beautiful in nature, the moral problem in the life, the affective element, are all more decisive factors in religion

than the purely rational. Probably ninety-nine persons seek to give a reason for their faith that has come through other channels, to one who comes to religious faith through intellectual processes. In fact, it would be difficult to prove that any person ever came into religious faith by the rational road. When a person is quite certain in his own mind that he has found his faith in this way, the chances are strongly that he too merely sought for an excuse in reason for that which came to him in some other way. Psychology has shown many cases of rationalization not only in religion, but even in science itself, in which the human mind would be expected to be carefully on its guard. The scientist unconsciously builds up a system of rationalization to bridge over a period of uncertainty, and will give explanations of recalcitrant phenomena which seem "far fetched" to another. If he is really a rational man, however, all the while he is holding his hypotheses in plastic fashion till finally his rationalizations will topple and he will suddenly change his opinion.

Modern psychology reveals an extent of rationalization in religious belief which was not before suspected. The study of pathological cases has furnished leads which have been followed up in normal cases. It is seen

now that arguments are concocted by the mind to fortify and justify beliefs which have been arrived at in other ways, and that reason plays a very minor part in religion. The principal value of reason in religion is to clarify it, free it from superstition, relate it to the rest of life, and to direct its energies into useful channels.

Furthermore, a religion held on purely rational grounds would be found to be unsatisfactory. Religion is an affair of the many sides of human nature and not of the intellect alone. The unnatural and anomalous situation would soon reveal itself and one of two things would likely happen: either the other sides of man's being, especially the affective, would be brought into larger play in his religion, or else finding his experience unsatisfactory, he would re-examine the grounds of his belief and gradually build up rationalizations against it. Arguments for religion are not so clear and convincing as to be free from contradiction.

These considerations lead one to investigate with some care the religion of persons of the distinctly intellectual type engaged in intellectual pursuits, such as scientists, philosophers, and professors, theological as well as college. Their religion is likely to be rather sterile, not contagious, and, on the whole, conventional.

From observation, as well as on theoretical grounds, we conclude that a purely rational religion would be almost useless—that a God at the end of a syllogism would be worth little more than the proof of the meeting of parallel lines in infinity. Religion until it is moralized and emotionalized is barren. There may be perfectly good reasons why Unitarianism has so largely failed to propagate itself, and for the fact that the New Theology proved to be a hindrance rather than a help to the propagation of the faith until around its concepts religious experiences had become entwined. The transition from the old faith to the New Theology is fraught with danger. It is too largely rational at first. The changes must be made from the old to the new, else will religion ossify; but the process is likely to be attended by a period of sterility.

To undertake to choose from the religions of mankind those elements which it is calculated would benefit the world would be as futile as to construct a religion from the ground up through rational processes. A syncretistic religion has little power to propagate itself, unless the process of eclecticism is one of adjustment to environment on the part of an organism of great vitality, such as was the case in early Christianity. If the religious syncre-

tism is a consciously intellectual process of choosing and amalgamating, it has all the sterility of intellectualism.

No religion without an affective element will be of much permanent benefit to mankind. If psychology of religion has taught one thing, it is the need for a permanent and real love-object. This is provided supremely in Jesus on the cross and in his teaching of the heavenly Father. To recover Jesus' religion rather than to make a new one is the challenging task.

Furthermore Jesus is final and ultimate. If Jesus is right at all, he is absolutely right. If truth lies in the direction of Jesus' teaching, he has stated the truth in ideal forms—has given it its ultimate expression. His statement of the threefold moral law of love to God, to neighbor, and to self is perfect and entire. There is nothing to take from it or to add to it—it is final, the last word is said on the subject. Jesus has taken the spirit of the ideal family life and applied it to the life of the whole world. The growth of humanitarianism in Occidental civilization is largely the result of the gradual approximation of Jesus' ideal of universal brotherhood under the Fatherhood of God. Flourney says that "Jesus has left us an idea of God which is the largest, the most beautiful, the most free from all

human meanness that it is possible to imagine."[3] Jesus used the method of art by which it is possible to express truths too great for words. Canon B. H. Streeter has given in a few sentences a remarkable summary of Jesus' teachings:

> God is the All-Father better than the best, wiser than the wisest man parent, therefore One ever seeking to heal and save, entirely to be trusted, purely to be loved. To be great is to be godlike, therefore the greatest man is he who best loves and serves his kind. God's children are all brothers, therefore "love thy neighbor as thyself" is the only law. God is God of the living, not the dead, therefore his love is sufficient guarantee that his children attain eternal life.[4]

After all, Jesus is greatest in what he was. It is his manner of life that gives significance to his teachings. "Christ is the greatest character in history, as Hamlet is the greatest character in art," says Clutton-Brock. Surely, there is only "one Lord Jesus Christ" and that in a far more significant way than was ever dreamed of by the ancient creedmakers. After these nineteen hundred years we have to say what the disciples sensed vaguely long ago, "Lord, to whom shall we go? thou alone hast the

[3] Quoted in W. Monod, *The Road to God*, p. 249. A. and C. Black, publishers. Reprinted by permission.

[4] From *Adventure*, p. 172. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

words of eternal life." Why Jesus? Because there is none other. He has no rival. No one else is seriously "bidding for the heart of the world." To ignore this fact would be extreme folly. In him we see what God is and man. He not only taught truth—he lived truth. He is "the way, the truth, and the life." We follow his teaching not because it is his, or because of any external attestation, but because seeing it we recognize it, and our minds and hearts respond to it. In him we recognize our own better selves.

3. Jesus Too Great for His Early Interpreters

In this section, as in some others where it might appear to readers that destructive criticism is indulged in, let it be understood clearly that this apparently destructive criticism is most emphatically constructive. It is for the purpose, and solely for the purpose, of clearing the way for a clear vision of Him whose face has been obscured all too long—even Jesus Christ our Lord, whom to know is to love, and whom to love intelligently is to devote oneself effectively to his cause of bringing the kingdom of love to a world greatly needing it. Let only him who reveres not our Holy Scriptures dare suspect that there is any

sort of satisfaction in destructive criticism. To him let the reply be, "Sir, we would see Jesus."

The assumption of the absolute accuracy of the Gospel accounts of the life and teachings of Jesus entails a number of embarrassing consequences, as was the case with the Old Testament as long as the Christian felt obliged to defend everything in it as inspired of God. As the Old Testament has been saved by the frank recognition that Moses and many other characters may well have made mistakes, and that the records may be at fault frequently, so the frank recognition of the fact of the inaccuracies and inconsistencies of the Gospel texts, the growth of the miraculous elements with the passing of time before the final editing, the reading of later Jewish and Gentile preaching back into the Gospels, the mistakes and interpolations of copyists, and many other causes of variations in the Gospel stories, saves Jesus the onus of having done and taught some untoward things recorded in our Gospels. We shall note a few examples only as instances of not a few similar cases.

Matthew (21. 18-22) and Mark (11. 12-14) record what would seem to be a rather peevish and resentful act, the cursing of the irresponsible fig tree. Luke does not record the

incident; but he has a parable of the fig tree which Matthew and Mark do not record. The cursing of the fig tree according to the first and second Gospels would seem to be a materialization of the parable which is recorded by Luke. The similarity of the language suggests this strongly: Mark says, "He came, if haply he might find anything thereon; and when he came to it, he found nothing but leaves." Matthew puts it, "He came to it and found nothing thereon, but leaves only." Luke's wording is of the parable, "He came seeking fruits thereon, and found none." The growth of the miraculous element with the passing of time is noticed in Matthew's statement, "and *immediately* the fig tree withered away," whereas, according to Mark, who writes it earlier, it is the *next morning* when they notice that the tree is withered.

The miraculous element is so interwoven in the Gospels that it is not possible, nor desirable either, to eliminate it from the text. In this case, although a supposed miracle is accounted for, it is the purpose not to explain away a miracle, but, rather, to call attention to an act entirely unworthy of Jesus and contrary to his spirit. The passage as it stands gives a wrong idea of the Jesus portrayed in clearly authentic passages.

In the synoptic Gospels we find the disciples confessing that they did not always understand Jesus. They could not grasp the meaning of the parables, even in some cases which seem perfectly clear to a person of average intelligence. They did not understand the purpose of the parables, and came to the exactly opposite conclusion from the intention of Jesus. He spoke in parables so the people might understand, and that more clearly and forcibly; but the disciples thought he was hiding his teaching from the people while favoring them with the secret meanings (Matt. 13. 10-16; Mark 6. 52; 8. 17-21; Luke 8. 9-15; 24. 16).

The failure of the disciples to understand Jesus' method of teaching is a slight matter in comparison with their failure to grasp the central meanings of his message. If we were to take the reports at face value, we should have to believe that Jesus considered himself the Messiah, and at the same time thought that he was to come another time as the Messiah; that he conceived of the kingdom of God as the gradually increasing rule of the divine principles of goodness, justice, and love in individual lives and in the social relations of people, and at the same time as a something to come down suddenly out of heaven;

that the Kingdom was a matter of direct political interference on the part of God, and at the same time a purely inward, spiritual matter; that he at one time forbade divorce on any ground whatsoever, and at another time permitted it on one condition.

Jesus, who so often told his disciples of the sacrifice which following him entailed, is reported to have said that those who had left family and worldly goods for the sake of the Kingdom would receive as a reward a hundredfold, "now in this time," of the *same sorts of blessings* (Matt. 19. 29-30; Mark 10. 29-30; Luke 18. 29, 30). Peter probably is representative of the rest of the disciples in his failure to understand or appreciate the redeeming value of sacrificial suffering, although he had come to see in a way that Jesus' life was Messianic. In his severe rebuke of Peter at Cæsarea Philippi, all the more severe because Jesus himself was enduring the same sort of temptation, Jesus tells Peter that he was far from understanding the mind of God, but was thinking in worldly fashion. The obtuse lack of spiritual penetration of Peter, James, and John is indicated in their desire to build three booths for Jesus, Moses, and Elijah on the Mount of Transfiguration. And we surely must believe that Jesus never meant to advise

anyone to humble himself just in order to be exalted.

Doubtless much of the unseemly self-exaltation of Jesus as recorded in the fourth Gospel is due to placing back into the lifetime of Jesus the honor accorded him in the early church. This is not to say that Jesus was not conscious of an unusual relationship of intimacy with the heavenly Father, or that he had not found the secret of triumphant and joyous living. These he must have manifested; but that he should have exalted himself in quite such unseemly fashion as is recorded in the fourth Gospel is not likely. In fact, one would be inclined to say that it would be all but impossible for one with such spiritual insight to do so.

Although Jesus probably recognized the legitimacy of reward for merit in a reasonable and moral universe, it does not seem to be in accord with his spirit to have advised anyone to take a lower seat at a feast for the sake of being invited up to a higher seat than any which he could well have chosen for himself, as the record taken at face value seems to indicate (Luke 14. 7-11). That he should have berated those who take the chief seats in an ostentatious manner is in harmony with other similar teachings; the rest of this device for securing a more honorable seating must be

either a gloss or an unfortunate wording. The sociological difficulties of indiscriminate giving "to every one that asketh," the admonition to sell all and follow Jesus, and the payment of the vine-laborer who worked but an hour the same wage as those who labored the entire day may be disposed of by the reasonable assumption that the reporter did not quite succeed in recording accurately a truth which we can discern between the lines. Although Jesus saw clearly the danger of riches, that anyone who so strongly emphasized the spirit of brotherhood should have been quite so prejudiced against the rich as Luke's sociological bent would lead one to believe, is not so likely as that the interests of the group of very poor in the early church should have been read back into the Gospel, as was the case with Matthew's lengthened account of the denunciation of the Pharisees which smacks of the bitterness of later Jewish persecutions. The commendation of the unjust steward, the matter of eunuchs, the apparent lack of appreciation of family ties, the sole interest of Jesus in his own people and the apparent contempt for Gentiles—all these are all more than counterbalanced by contrary teachings, and may be explained by lack of understanding on the part of reporters or by any one of a variety

of ways whereby inaccuracies have crept into the text, and so offer no serious difficulties except for those who insist on the strict accuracy of the accounts.

The four Gospels present an inconsistent character sketch of Jesus, unless the very size and complexity of the Personality of Jesus exceed our comprehension. The Jesus of the fourth Gospel is an extremely spirituelle type, while he of the synoptics is the strong Son of God, speaking powerful words and doing wonderful deeds. In the synoptics Jesus is a very practical man, one who went about doing good. In the fourth Gospel Jesus is almost sentimentally loving and kind, while, according to the other Gospels, he pronounces the most vigorous denunciations of evildoers in high places. It is universally recognized that the fourth Gospel is late. It is not so well known that all the peculiar phraseology which the Gospel puts into the mouth of Jesus is found in the mystical literature of just that part of Asia Minor where it is thought that the last Gospel was written. The writer of this Gospel seems to be undertaking to correct some of the data of the earlier Gospels; that is, as to the time of the crucifixion (B. W. Bacon), but his main purpose seems to be to present another side of the character of Jesus.

In some instances it is clear enough that Jesus was misreported. In many cases it must have been that he was misreported because he was not understood. It seems far more likely that the disciples failed to understand Jesus in many instances, and that they therefore did not report him correctly, than that Jesus himself could have been inconsistent. There are even in the faulty records so many evidences of clear thinking on the part of Jesus, as we shall have frequent occasion to see further on in this volume, that it is scarcely reasonable to believe that he could have been muddled. It is no matter of surprise that Jesus was not always understood when he quite totally reversed the popular sense of values. He saw so deeply into human life and so thoroughly appreciated spiritual things that only one of some sort of similar character could have understood him. Indeed, Matthew seems to think that Jesus said and did many things just in order that the prophecies about him might be fulfilled! Early tradition regarding the personal appearance of Jesus followed the Old Testament predictions of "no form or comeliness." That in like manner some supposed predictions were read into the life and teachings of Jesus seems quite probable.

He who gave us some of the most beautiful

things in literature—the parable of the prodigal son, which teaches more of the longing love of God for his children than all the volumes of theology ever written; the parable of the good Samaritan, which has become proverbial; He who in the Sermon on the Mount set forth the characteristics of genuine manhood and outlined the features of a truly human society; He who saw so deeply into the heart of man and understood so well the mind of God was too great for his reporters and early interpreters. Those who might have understood Jesus were too tightly bound about with the privileges afforded them in the priestly traditions. Jesus was obliged to turn to those who were not so well pleased with themselves and their lot. He found willing but rather shallow soil in which to sow his truth. And yet it would seem that it is providential that we know so little of the letter. By being obliged to disentangle accounts not always consistent one is brought to the discovery of fundamental and eternal ideals behind the incidental pronouncements and deeds performed with reference to particular circumstances. Perhaps thus we shall find the Spirit more fully, and so give ourselves to the guidance of great and universally applicable principles rather than attempt to live by the

letter of the Gospel which we are so prone to transform into regulations which are temporary and circumstantial.

Again, had Jesus been only so much of a revelation of man and God as could have been comprehended nineteen hundred years ago, would he not have been the Saviour for that age alone? How could he have been our Saviour too? But he is too great for full comprehension by any age. It has been only partially that he has been understood and appreciated. It is just this lack of better appreciation that has been the cause of the failure of Christianity to conquer the whole world, or completely to Christianize any part of it.

4. Paul the Founder of "Christianity"

Paul in all probability did not know Jesus at all intimately; and it is not impossible that he never heard or even saw him. At any rate we may be certain that, if he did know him, he did not understand and appreciate him, else he would have followed him. In order to prove the originality and divinity of his message Paul minimizes his debt to other men. One would suppose that he would have availed himself of the opportunity to secure much information directly from the apostles during his visits to Jerusalem. He belittles these

opportunities and asserts that his apostleship is directly from the risen Lord. In his Epistles he refers to Jesus in the flesh only occasionally and quotes him more rarely. He seems to have only a very general idea of the life and teachings of Jesus. His greater interest surely is in the spiritual Christ. Possibly he knew more than he revealed in Epistles on practical matters to people who might be assumed to know well the facts about Jesus. He received his gospel largely by ecstatic vision. In some cases he considers a firm conviction divine inspiration and revelation. We would say that we were sure that we were right and that what we say is truth.

Paul the Pharisee, born a Jew but also a Roman citizen, brought up in Tarsus, a great Greek cultural center, and educated in Jerusalem, was admirably fitted for the task of mediating a religion of Jewish origin to the Græco-Roman world. He was Greek enough to begin the interpretation of the religion to the Greeks. He was Roman enough to avoid offense in his presentation of the gospel. All the while he was a Jew, and his religion was colored by this fact. His early supreme interest was to bring the Jews into the new faith.

The debt that Christianity owes to Paul is so great that one may say without exaggeration

that but for some such providential person as was the apostle Paul, humanly speaking, the religion would not have lived at all. He was really the founder of historical Christianity. The discussion as to whether it was Jesus or Paul who founded Christianity has always been confused by the identification of Christianity and the religion of Jesus. If these are identified, there are cogent reasons for the contention that either is the founder. If the proper distinction is made between the two religions, it at once becomes clear that Jesus is the founder of one and Paul the other. It is entirely possible that the real historical person, Paul, was not materially at variance with Jesus, but that the divergence comes from the literature attributed traditionally to Paul, but which is not his. Critics practically universally agree that there is such a body of literature. We shall for our purpose speak uncritically and mean by "Paul" the literature commonly called "Pauline," being all the time conscious of the possibility that in so doing we may be doing the real Paul an injustice. If we are doing him this injustice, let this suffice for our apology. Let us note now the respects in which Paul in this sense is the author of "Christianity."

Jesus' religion is pure religion. Behind all

there are assumptions; but he did not consider it worth while to argue them. He simply assumed them. Had it been possible, it would have been better had the religion never been encumbered with a theology. The divisive effect of theology and the cruelties and wars resulting from creeds have disgraced religion. But there were the Greeks to be won who would philosophize, and their overcurious minds had to be satisfied. They would not be satisfied with Jesus' religion; they must have "Christianity." Paul began the process of winning them by his theology.

The Latin legal mind also required its atonements and legal satisfactions for sins; and Paul began the process of fitting his religion into the Roman legal and governmental system by his doctrine of mediation and atonement in satisfaction for sin, and at the same time, as in the case of the arguments in the Epistle to the Hebrews, he was offering a very effective Jewish apology by fitting Jesus into the Jewish sacrificial system. The devotees of the Greek and the Oriental Mystery Religions must be won for Christ; and this multitudinous Paul showed how his religion could be made into a mystery.

Thus Paul's work was providentially prophetic in that he was unconsciously pre-

paring the way for the triumph of "Christianity" in the whole Roman Empire. This is what we mean when we say that the religion humanly speaking would not have lived but for some Paul who should perform this great task of preparing the religion for its future ascendency over all its rivals in the Græco-Roman world.

While performing these important tasks, Paul modifies Jesus' religion to such an extent that it seems to become in many respects quite another faith. Of a God who delivers humanity over to reprobation Jesus knows nothing; nor of the kind of God whose wrath needs appeasing. The idea that the kind heavenly Father who numbers the very hairs of our heads needs some agent between himself and the material world for the purpose of creation is not simply foreign to Jesus, it is flatly contrary to his central idea of God. Paul's Platonic heavenly archetypal pre-existent Christ has little in common with the Jesus of the synoptic Gospels; nor his Stoic world-soul Christ "through whom all things were made and by whom all things hold together." Paul's wickedness of the natural man contrasts strongly with Jesus' sheep lost from the fold that needs help, and the prodigal who is still the father's longed-for son, and who,

when he comes to himself, decides to go home to his father.

He [Paul] was led by his own experience to draw a distinction between the fleshly man, who is essentially corrupt, and the spiritual man, who is essentially holy. The one is natural, the other supernatural. The one is doomed to destruction, the other is an heir of eternal life. The spiritual man does not come from the natural by a process of development and growth, but is a new creature born directly from above. Wherever Paul may have gotten the suggestion which led him to interpret his experience in this way, his low estimate of man and his contrast between flesh and spirit revealed the ultimate influence of Oriental dualism which was profoundly affecting the Hellenistic world of the day.[5]

That "Christianity" has followed Paul's and not Jesus' idea of woman and marriage has become so well known as to need no elucidation. In few things scarcely has religion been more unfortunate. Paul's asceticism is the opposite of Jesus' ideals and practices. His superstitious statement that some have been made ill and some killed by not discerning the body in the Lord's Supper reveals the influence on Paul of the supposed magical power of the mystery communions (1 Cor. 11. 29, 30).

The most unfortunate thing about this Pauline transformation of the religion of Jesus

[5] A. C. McGiffert, *Protestant Thought Before Kant*, pp. 1-4. Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

into "Christianity" is the fact that Paul has been followed far more than Jesus not only in the ancient times, but down to the present day, in Christianity as a whole. Even in our day, in Protestant churches, sermon texts are taken from Paul much more frequently than from the teachings of Jesus. This predominance of Paul is perfectly natural, for Paul's ideas were very much akin to the commonly accepted religious ideas of the ancient world, from his doctrine of an offish God employing mediators, all the way down to his idea of the divine authority of the tyrannical emperor—a teaching which to some degree has hindered the progress of civil liberty in the Western world, but more especially in the domains of the Greek Church.

We should like to close this chapter as we began it, by paying tribute to the greatness of Paul and to his providential place in the history of Christianity. No man with historical perspective can fail to appreciate Paul's services. He seems to have been necessary for the continuance and the spread of the faith. It is not our purpose to detract from his glory. Were it the time and place to do so we should rejoice to point out further Paul's services to Western civilization. It is solely for the purpose now of understanding and appreciating

Jesus that we contrast Paul and Jesus, instead of calling attention to their likenesses. Too long, entirely too long for the salvation of souls and for the progress of our civilization, we have failed to distinguish between Jesus and Paul, and have compromised the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. By absolutely unbiased historical study, it can be shown that whenever and wherever Christianity has had a retarding influence upon civilization it has been because and in so far as Christianity has failed to represent the spirit of Jesus. We must not spare even Paul for the excellency of the knowledge of Jesus, who is truly our Saviour and the Saviour of the whole world.

5. The Theological Christ in a Philosophy of Religion

The process of the transformation of Jesus' religion into Christianity begun by Paul, and with all its sublimities carried a little further by the Johannine literature, was continued in the work of the apologists of the second century. These writers were Greek philosophers who had accepted Christianity: Aristides, "the Philosopher of Athens"; Justin, "the Philosopher," called after his death "The Martyr," and the others. After they had defended the religion against the calumny of the ancient

"muckrakers" and undertaken its proof from the fulfillment of prophecy and by its moral effects, they next turned their attention to the task of explaining the religion in terms intelligible to the Greek mind. To do this they searched out all the common ground that could be found, and they found a good deal, and obtained a good deal more by modifying Christianity so as to harmonize with Greek philosophy. Where they found too many and too embarrassing analogies among the ideas and practices of the religions of the time which could claim priority to Christianity, the apologists resorted to the accusation that the devils had revealed many Christian truths and rites so as to discredit Christianity when it should appear.

In other instances they declared that the Greek philosophers had borrowed from Moses and the prophets, or affirmed that philosophy was revealed to the Greeks by the Logos, who had become incarnate and had spoken fully and without hesitation in Christ. It was not quite possible to make all their arguments convincing, but their success was remarkable. What really had happened was that the Christians had already rather unconsciously interpreted their religion in terms of the commonly accepted ideas of the time, beginning as far

back as the apostle Paul; and the sacraments too had been modified in the direction of the mysteries. In order to make their religion congenial and intelligible, the apologists went still further in the direction of interpreting the religion in terms of Greek philosophy. Indeed, any special revelation would have been unnecessary, they said, but for the nefarious work of the demons who had clouded men's minds so that the Logos, who had revealed much philosophy to the Greeks, could not make the revelation complete. Now, in "the new Socrates who had arisen among the barbarians," the Logos has become incarnate; and in spite of the demons has revealed the new and saving philosophy, as Aristides says. Justin thought that Socrates could put the right questions, but that he could not give the right answers. They are given by the incarnate Logos. And so the apologists created their theology out of Greek philosophy, and then proved it from Greek philosophy. The result was a pretty thorough beginning of the reconciliation of Christianity and culture which was completed in the second and third centuries by the early systematic theologians who also (Clement, Origen) were Greek philosophers. The system of theology which was wrought out at that time *was* Greek philosophy in Christian

dress, as Professor Harnack has so well and so often said.

The exceedingly strong appeal of the work of the apologists may be sensed by the following excerpts from the writings of Justin Martyr: "Whatever either lawyers or philosophers uttered well, they labored by finding and contemplating some part of the Word. Since they knew not the whole of the Word, which is Christ, they often contradicted themselves." Justin found in Christianity "the true and salutary philosophy; for it has in it a power to awe which restrains when one is prone to depart from the right Way; and the sweetest peace is the portion of those who practice it." "Our teacher of these things is Jesus Christ, who was born for the purpose." "Christ is the Logos of whom the whole race partakes, and those who live according to reason are Christians even though they may have been accounted atheists. Such among the Greeks were Socrates and Heraclitus and those who resembled them." "Christ was even partly known to Socrates," declares Justin. "Christ mingles in humanity as perfume in the flower." This is the Greek Logos doctrine with slight Christian gloss. It has comparatively little to do with Jesus of Nazareth.

One is not inclined to blame the apologist

for continuing Paul's process of making over the religion of Jesus into a philosophy of religion. Their motives were the best. However, they continued a process whereby in time the acceptance of correct (orthodox) doctrines became the prime condition of becoming a "Christian," and became the supreme test of church membership in the place of an experience of religion and evidences of a changed life. This trend was greatly accelerated by the work of the Greek theologians.

The first systematic Greek theologians, Clement of Alexandria and Origen, had less interest in Jesus and his religion than did the apologists. They too were interested in the Logos. Clement follows Philo, the Jew of Alexandria, very closely, as a comparison of his works with "The Life Contemplative" of Philo constantly reminds one. Their doctrines of God and the Logos are almost identical. For both the attainment of bliss is by rising through philosophical speculation to a vision of God. That one had only the Old Testament wisdom and the Greek Logos while the other had also the Logos incarnate made but little difference. For Clement the believing Christian is on a very inferior plane to the knowing Christian. The real Christian is the Gnostic. Harnack reminds us that this use of Greek philosophy

saved it from oblivion by incorporating it into Christian theology. "Through Clement, theology became the crowning stage of piety. The philosophy of the Greeks was placed under the protection and guarantee of the church, and the whole Hellenic civilization was thus at the same time legitimized within Christianity."

One should not infer that the Christianity of the rank and file was also of this high speculative type; but it was these leaders who gave content and direction to Christian tradition.

Origen's world is the Platonic one. The real world exists in the spiritual realm which lies back and above this temporary visible world. In that spiritual world, the archetypal one, our souls pre-existed; there they sinned; but here they exist for a time for punishment and recovery. The source of all is God, dwelling in passionless bliss, who comes into contact with this world through a "second God," a subordinate Logos, through whom he created the world, and by whom he redeems it. Origen's Logos is more akin to the later Neo-Platonic "nous" (mind) than to the Logos of the Stoics, Philo, and the apologists. However, in Christian fashion the Logos becomes incarnate, but after the resurrection he becomes for Origen altogether divine, the hu-

manity being given the glory of the divine. By the same process we are all saved, for Christ began the union of the human and the divine, which is to take place in all men. Origen out-Platonizes the Platonists. But he begins at least within Christian boundaries with a voluntary faith, though he departs from it pretty soon, on his way to the "contemplative life," that joyous ascetic contemplation, no longer of visible things, but of "rational substance" which the Logos is, in contemplation of which, by the aid of the Logos, the soul becomes pure spirit and is deified and clings in love to the Deity. The historical Life of Jesus is a reality, and rather necessary for people with limited endowment; but he affirms emphatically that it is not of much consequence to the initiated.

The historical Jesus is still further lost sight of in the controversies which arose over the points raised by Origen. The controversies have raged even down to our time; but the early church came to a temporary agreement concerning the doctrine of the Person of Christ at the Council of Chalcedon, 451 A. D. The resulting doctrine furnishes scarcely any reminders of Jesus of Nazareth. When we read the synoptic Gospels and the theology of the period of the Fathers, we are conscious of being

in different worlds. The reader is urged to read again the findings of this council and note the entire absence of anything which even remotely reminds one of the life or teachings of Jesus. In spite of its limitations and faults, this Christian system continued to be the best thought, the most rational, the most moral, and the most religious, the most congenial to contemporary culture till the time of the Renaissance, when a new flood of learning deluged Europe. At that time the church, dominated by priestly traditionalism, refused to make new interpretations of religion. The result was a great gulf fixed between religion and culture which, for the larger part of the Christian world, has continued down to our very day.

The reader by this time may be asking the question, Why this departure from Jesus? Why did he not make a stronger appeal? It was because he was not understood; because his teachings were contrary at so many points to the commonly accepted ideas of the time as to be really revolutionary; because his standards were so high and so far beyond the contemporary Jewish and heathen ideals, and because he taught and was the ideal to which humanity will still be long in attaining. Let this suffice for the present. The full signifi-

cance of these statements will appear as we proceed.

6. The Further Loss of Jesus in the Christian Mysteries

As the stream of Christian history lengthened, the doctrines and practices of the church diverged further and further from the religion of Jesus. Altars, candles, images, tonsured, celibate, especially robed priests; dramatic allegorical representations of the sufferings of the Saviour, intonations; Lent, Easter, Christmas; baptismal rebirth, identification with the God through a "communion," the confessional, spiritual marriages with the Deity, pilgrimages, flagellations, ascetic mortifications, processions —what have these and a hundred other accessories to do with the apostolic church or the religion of Jesus? What value there is in these instrumentalities for our day is a proper question with which we are not now concerned. That they are postapostolic innovations cannot be successfully denied. Furthermore, Christianity in its sacerdotal development became just what Jesus condemned so severely in the priestly system of the church of his day.

"It was a religion of redemption which professed to remove the estrangement between man and God, to procure forgiveness of sins,

to furnish mediation. Means of purifications and formulæ of access to God and acclamations of confidence and victory were a part of the apparatus." It "professed to satisfy the desire for the knowledge of God which became pronounced from at least the second century B. C." It was "a sacramental drama," "a divine drama which portrayed before the wondering eyes of the privileged observers the story of the struggles, sufferings, and victory, . . . the travail of nature in which life ultimately triumphs over death, and joy is born of pain." "The spring festival . . . was rehearsed in a passion play." "Then followed lamentations . . . with an appropriate period of abstinence . . . to prove their participation in the sorrows of the god that they might have fellowship in his joy." "Their chief charm was that they brought an evangel of life and immortality to comfort the mystery of the grave."

"If one desired to enter the fellowship . . . and share its privileges, he was called upon to undergo examination and disciplinary preparation." "Some sort of a confession of sin was required." "Baptisms, or lustral purifications, were required," "and they imagine that the result of this baptism is regeneration and the remission of the penalties of their sins." "As-

cetic preparations of all kinds and degrees of rigor were practiced, prolonged fasts, absolute continence, . . . uncomfortable pilgrimages to holy places, public confession, contributions to church funds . . . Some of these were so severe as to be expected only from the priests or saints." "Obligations of painful self-mortifications were laid upon those . . . who would excel in the cult, or become a priest, or reap the full advantages of adherence."

It would be perfectly easy to continue page after page of these quotations describing the mystery religions, and the reader would naturally suppose that reference was being made all the while to Christianity, for the description fits both equally well. The above quotations are from a delineation of the features of the mystery religions by S. Angus.[6] Equally apropos to Christianity is Doctor Angus' treatment of the Mysteries under the headings: "Ceremonies of Initiation," "Regeneration," "Communion and Union with the Deity," "Religious Marriage," "Divine Services," "Sacramental Meals," "Contemplative Adoration," "Immortality," etc., in the same volume, Contents, Ch. III.

Christianity is an historical development, beginning with the apostolic times. There is

[6] *Mystery Religions and Christianity*, p. 50ff. Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

scarcely a single departure from Jesus' religion which did not have its embryonic beginning in the apostolic church. Sometimes these developments were read back into the Gospels, even placed among the teachings of Jesus. In the case of the Mysteries, the fourth Gospel is surcharged with their influence, and Paul by no means escaped their subtle influence, which was in the very air he breathed while in Tarsus.

Thus the religion of Jesus became a mystery religion. This statement is not made as a condemnation. Perhaps this transformation was a necessary adjustment to environment. It would seem that had not the religion become a philosophy, a mystery, and an imperial organization, it could never have overcome its rivals and become the religion of the Western world. This is not to say that in our day the religion should remain what it was in the ancient or mediæval times, or what the Roman Catholic Church is in our day. Some of these innovations nullify some of the fundamentals of Jesus' religion. Many people in our time are not helped by these ancient mysteries; and many there are who are repelled, not knowing that the things which appear to them untoward are not essential features of the religion of Jesus, but are pagan accumulations. Our purpose is to distinguish as clearly as

possible between the religion of Jesus and much of traditional Christianity.

7. From Gospel to Law in Roman Imperial Christianity

The imperial sacerdotal hierarchy of the fully developed Roman Catholic Church has very slight resemblance to the organization of the apostolic church, and much less to the peripatetic little group who followed their Master about learning of his teaching.

Quite in the same category with the differences in outward organization is the contrast of the very elaborate sacramental drama of the worship of the cathedral performed by priests for the benefit of the people, with the meetings in private houses in apostolic times for mutual encouragement, prayer, and praise. The sacrament of the Holy Eucharist in the service of the mass has only a few verbal reminders of what Jesus did in the upper room. The difference between the Greek Testament and the Latin New Testament may be illustrated by the Latin rendering of the exhortation "Repent." The Greek *metanoite* means "change your mind," "look at things differently," "take a different view of the meaning of life"; while the Latin rendering, *poinetentia,* means "penance," "satisfaction

for sins," always with the thought of doing oneself some punishment. The Greek is psychological; the Latin legal; the Greek is inward, spiritual; the Latin external, material; the Greek is personal; the Latin governmental.

Jesus thinks of religion in the terms of the family of the heavenly Father. Latin Christianity is not simply flavored with legalism; it is dominated by the governmental conception. The Latins have taken the religion of Jesus from the beautiful intimacies of the family and placed it in the formalities of the Roman imperial court. Even the very forms of worship are but a slight modification of imperial-court etiquette. A recent Roman Catholic writer justifies the worship of images on the ground that it is not worship (although he himself would doubtless call it such in the case of the heathen), but merely the manner in which it was the custom to show respect in court society in the ancient times. Indeed, he is quite right in the latter statement. The Eastern ritual is about as much more elaborate than the Roman as was the Oriental court etiquette than the Roman. The magical mysteries too are more in evidence in the Eastern church than in the Western; whereas the legalisms are more prominent in the Roman Church than in the Greek.

The first writers in Latin were converted Roman lawyers who at the time were residing in Carthage, North Africa—Tertullian and his disciple Cyprian. These two men are the founders of Latin Christianity. They and others following them had made the transformation quite complete before the Greek New Testament was translated into Latin by Jerome and called the Vulgate. The translation was made with the bias of the Latinisms of the Western fathers. When Greek was revived in the Renaissance, the humanists were astounded at the differences between the Greek New Testament and the Latin. The Reformation was an attempt to revert to the pattern of the church which the Greek New Testament presented and which was so different from the church of the period.

The East was in the Roman Empire for several centuries and received the impress of its genius; but we are now following the traditions of the Western Church in particular, through which Protestantism received its traditions. The church became imperial not only in its outward organization, but also in its hierarchical priesthood, which contrasts flatly with the apostolic teaching of the priesthood of all believers and with Jesus' religion, in which priesthood has no more place than in the

family between the child and the parent. The ecclesiastical organization has authority in its realm quite as extensive as that of the Roman imperial government in political matters. Absolute obedience is expected, as in the empire, and ecclesiastical citizenship also guarantees many privileges, for the church mediates the saving knowledge and the saving grace to those within the pale of the church who alone, therefore, are saved.

There are a good many reasons why religion is conservative and traditional. It is a matter of feeling and sentiment more than of pure reason. It becomes incorporated into institutions, organizations, forms of worship, creeds, hymns, all of which outlast their usefulness, and persist long after they have ceased truly to represent the spirit of the religion. All this is partly due to the fact of its being easier to continue in a straight line than to turn; easier to follow on than to rethink, reorganize, restate in new terms the implications of the faith. Furthermore, where great values are at stake, changes are not made without very carefully thought out justifications; hence it is that social ossification is most likely to take place in religious institutions.

The excessive traditionalism which has done so much to hinder adaptation to environment

in later times and prevents the acceptance of new and saving truths on the part of the church is due partly at least to the influence of the traditionalism of Roman legalism. With the possible exception of theology, law is the most conservative human institution. When the republic of Rome was changed into the empire, the people were not aware of the fact. The old forms of government were retained for a long time wholly intact. But one man, the "emperator," "the commander-in-chief" of the armies, dictated the actions of senators and all other agents of government. When some new departure was called for by some changed circumstance, a legal precedent was fabricated "out of whole cloth." This invention of a precedent out of pure fiction was what came to be known as "legal fiction." The imperial church followed the example of the imperial state and found justification for new departures in organization, form of worship, for its sacerdotalism, for its apostolic succession, and for its new doctrines in "legal fictions." By means of this ruse the church was able and the Roman Catholic Church is still able to find in the New Testament and in the early fathers all the new doctrines and practices acquired during a thousand years. These legal "fictions" make possible changes which are absolutely neces-

sary for the continuance of the institution, but they also tend to make the church an excessively traditional institution.

Roman legalism has been responsible, too, for a large part of the legalism in the Christian doctrine of salvation. Some very un-Christ-like doctrines of the atonement are based on the idea that every sin must be punished by an equivalent amount of suffering. This corollary of the "lex talionis" unfortunately has been the basis of the penitentiary systems of Christendom which have confirmed more criminality than they have cured. The Roman Catholic doctrines of penance, indulgences, and purgatory, with their immoral effects, are to be traced ultimately to the influence of the legal system of the imperial Roman state. They have been perpetuated partly because they are found to be excellent means of keeping the people in subjection to the church and to the priesthood. They have no resemblance to any of the teachings of Jesus, and in some respects at least are contrary to his spirit.

Professor von Schubert says, "Belief is the inward act of obedience; piety is conformity to church law," in the Roman Church. Quoting Von Schubert further, "In the Middle Ages people were confronted on all sides by the commands of the church; they were encom-

passed as it were by an iron ring; all their thoughts, desires, feelings, knowledge, worship, piety were regulated for them."[7] In the Roman Catholic Church the gospel of Jesus has been transformed almost completely into a legal code. The Roman Catholic Church has become, and in Jesus' name, just what he condemned so strongly in the Judaism of his day. This is a very severe indictment, but it is a just one, and it has great significance for our time, as we shall see.

8. State Churches and the Further Loss of Jesus' Religion

The most severe and the most skillfully planned persecution of Christianity was that undertaken by Diocletian. He failed. Constantine was astute enough to see that the strength of this minority religion was all out of proportion to the numbers of its adherents. By alliance with this power he saw the possibility of attaining the throne and unifying a disrupted empire. He dared not alienate the support of the pagans, and had to proceed cautiously, but his purpose was to have one emperor, one law, and one religion. He and his successors gradually granted more and

[7] *Outlines of Church History*, p. 207. Reprinted by permission of G. P. Putnam's Sons.

more favors to Christians and, *pari passu*, dealt with paganism with increasing rigor till they had proscribed it altogether.

The dealings of Constantine and his successors with the church show perfectly clearly that they did not care as much for orthodoxy, or even religion itself, as for the political advantages to be secured through the unifying and pacifying influence of the institution. Scarcely had Constantine become securely settled on the throne before a controversy broke out in North Africa which was destroying the unity of the church. Soon another schism was rending the church at Alexandria. In dealing with the Donatist and the Arian controversies, the emperors favored this side now, and another side at another time, according as the waxing or waning parties gave promise of supremacy. There was always a possibility that some pretender to the throne might ally himself with a strong schismatic party in the church and dispute the possession of the throne. If Constantine and his immediate successors had had any concern for orthodoxy, they would not have exiled and recalled Athanasius five times.

If Catholicism was unifying, heresy was disruptive, as Constantine and his successors discovered. By the time of Justinian, heresy,

sectionalism, and nationalism (as distinguished from imperialism) were in alliance in Syria and in Egypt, while in the West Arianism still continued to foster independent tribalism. Justinian undertook by war, by legislation, by intrigue, and by every means at hand to unify the church and the state, but without success. However, the devotion of Syria and Egypt to his empress, Theodora, who was favorable toward the Monophysite heresy, aided him in his efforts at unification.

Political rulers down the Christian ages have found it advantageous to make political use of Christianity. "All the experiences, all the circumstances of Constantine, had led him to the path which he pursued. . . . Diplomacy was a guiding principle; it led Clovis to become a Christian—a Catholic and a Roman Christian."[8] "The general religion which this kingdom (Clotaire's, about 560 A. D.) was obliged to seek, Christianity, would be most serviceable if it assumed a universal, general, Catholic form, not a national and restricted form such as that of Arianism, which only created tribal churches which, though of a national character, were not closely knit together. The extensive Merovingian kingdom and the Roman Catholic

[8] H. von Schubert, *Outlines of Church History*, p. 173. Reprinted by permission of G. P. Putnam's Sons.

Church were seeking each other and went half way to meet each other."[9] The temporal rule of the Popes with its far-reaching consequences began when Pope Stephen II and Pippin the Short discovered that they could be of mutual political aid. The political use which Charlemagne made of the church is too well known to need comment. He employed it and its officials in all departments of government.

Otto I (936–973) had twice to fight for his throne against these powers (dukes). He therefore adopted that policy which had such an all-important bearing on the history of the German church down to the time of Napoleon I; he sought the help of his church against the temporal lords, and the church provided him, as it did Clovis before him, with all he needed, a power which transcended the limits of the tribe. Accordingly, . . . he made the church the administrator of as much crown land as possible, awarded it privileges, and converted the bishops and royal abbots into territorial lords, who paid him taxes and supplied the largest contingents for his army.[10]

The Imperial Catechism of 1806 was made obligatory in all the Roman Catholic churches of France. In it is found the following:

To honor and serve our Emperor, then, is to honor and serve God himself. It is he whom God has raised up to re-establish public worship and

[9] H. von Schubert, *Outlines of Church History*, p. 175. Reprinted by permission of G. P. Putnam's Sons.

[10] H. von Schubert, *Outlines of Church History*, pp. 195, 196. Reprinted by permission of G. P. Putnam's Sons.

the holy religion of our fathers. He has become the anointed of the Lord through the consecration he has received from the sovereign Pontiff. . . . According to the apostle Paul they (who are lacking in their duty toward the emperor) would be resisting the order established by God himself and so render themselves worthy of eternal damnation.[11]

When Parliament refused the king's demands for money, he [Archbishop Laud] advised the levying of forced loans, and began the process of "tuning the pulpits" in their support. The bishops were to enforce on their clergy the preaching of the king's prerogative and the religious obligation of complying with his demands. So in a sermon by Doctor Mainwaring, a king's chaplain, we read: "Among all the powers that be ordained of God, the regal is most high, strong, and large. Kings are, above all, inferior to none, to no man, to no multitude of men, to no angels, to no order of angels. Their power is not merely human, it is superhuman. It is a participation of God's omnipotency, which he never did communicate to any multitudes of men, but only and immediately to his own vicegerents."[12]

The Protestant Reformation, which divided the church into various sects and created a number of state churches, rendered the church much more amenable to secular control and far more useful to rulers for political purposes. Luther's ashes would have been scattered to the winds quite promptly had not some terri-

[11] See W. Monod, *The Road to God*, Tr. Gillie, London, 1928, pp. 213, 214. Reprinted by permission.

[12] W. B. Selbie, *Congregationalism*, pp. 52, 53. Reprinted by permission of author.

torial lords in Germany seen in him a pawn to play off against the Pope for political and economic purposes, and perceived in the divided church a far much better chance to rule. After the Peasants' War, Luther, like John Knox when he could not control "the rascal multitude," lost faith in the people, and with childlike trust handed the care of the church over to the "Christian [civil] authorities." The ambitious princes were not slow to avail themselves of an excellent means of increasing their power over the people. They derived large economic advantage. Luther pleaded in vain that the princes at least endow some educational institution and not squander all the revenues of the newly secularized endowments. He complained that the princes gave evidence of being evangelical by "pouncing upon the endowments" of the churches.

The rise of nationalism and the progress of political absolutism resulted in the transformation of the old international church into state churches with the result of "Byzantine loss of freedom." The evils of state support and control increased as the modern secularization of the state proceeded to demolish the former religious and theocratic conception of political power. Even Calvinism, which originally in Geneva through the church really con-

trolled the state, succumbed to the universal tendency in Protestantism toward the state-church idea. In so-called democratic countries it has been the controlling class that has dominated the church—the upper middle class—while in monarchial states the priest has allied himself with the ruler. In the nineteenth century even Roman Catholics, Greek Catholics, and Protestant rulers have allied themselves, altar and throne, for the perpetuation of monarchial power, although ostensibly to preserve the peace of Europe. This unholy movement was called the "Holy Alliance."

Luther handed the church over to civil rulers, and they and their successors continued to control it till the downfall of the empire in 1918. The state-imposed Evangelical Union of 1817 of Lutherans and Calvinists into the one Evangelical Church, with resulting persecutions and emigrations, is an example of the intention of the kings of Prussia to strengthen the state and stabilize the throne by the use of the church. Although German universities lead in the liberal theological movement, the state saw to it that popular religion in Germany should be the old authoritative type, in harmony with governmental autocracy and bureaucracy.

The political control and economic support

of religion in nearly every state in Europe have not been continued in modern times so much for religious purposes as political. The control of the church by the state for political reasons was the main cause of the persecution of dissent in England, which in turn led to the settlement of America. The most recent example of ecclesiastical control for political purposes was the refusal of Parliament to sanction the revised prayer book of the English Church. The main reason for this action was not solely because of religious scruples or theological interests, for many who voted against the adoption had no such interest or concern. It was not because the members of Parliament feared that the people were going back into idolatry by worshiping a god made of wine and bread. If one may judge by the reported debates, the adverse action came from fear that the retention of the elements, even when not on the altar but hidden away somewhere in the sacristy, might become a little entering wedge for the interference again in England of a foreign political power which in times past had seated and dethroned kings, imposed taxes upon the realm, and too often introduced fear and suspicion, and made the political institutions of the realm unsafe.

9. The Militaristic Evangelization of Europe

There is a vast difference between the missionary method which was employed during the first three centuries of Christian history and the way in which Teutonic and Celtic Europe was brought into subjection to the ecclesiastical and civil authorities and thus "Christianized." The remarks of the Pomeranian Dukes to Bishop Otto illustrate the difference: "Let us reverse the custom of the primitive church so that the holiness of the divine religion beginning with us who are chiefs and passing on to the middle classes by easy progress may enlighten the whole people and race." Kings and princes were converted and the rest of the population by command of the ruler and the rattling of his sword. How much change of heart was there on the part of the three thousand soldiers who were baptized with Clovis? or of the ten thousand (if we can believe the Venerable Bede) who were baptized on another Christmas Day by Saint Augustine?

Holy Nestor of Kief, in the Russian Chronicle, tells us how Christianity came to his country. In the year 986 there came to King Vladimir Mohammedans from Bulgaria recommending their religion. They confessed that

they ate no pork and drank no wine. Vladimir said to them, "We Russians cannot live without drink." Roman Catholics had to confess that they fasted as well as feasted. The former custom made no appeal. The Jews when asked where was their country were embarrassed. Greek philosophers made the best impression; but the cautious king decided to send envoys to the various nations to observe the religions in their own countries. The services in Saint Sophia, in which the angels came down from heaven and served at the altar (altar boys), convinced the envoys that the Greek Catholic was the true religion. But, like Clovis, Vladimir asked a price for serving his God, and bargained that if he was divinely aided to capture Kherson in the Crimea, he would worship Jehovah. The God of the Christians won; Vladimir and his warriors were baptized. Returning home, he tied the god Perun to a horse's tail, dragged it through the streets, and threw it into the river, threatening that "all who on the morrow do not assemble at the river for baptism" would incur his wrath. Thousands stood in the river on the morrow and ducked at the proper time as a priest read the baptismal ceremony. From Kief Vladimir proceeded throughout his dominions converting the people till before his death all were "Chris-

tians." As a further reward he received the hand of the Greek princess, Anna, sister of Basil and Constantine.

To Willibrod, the apostle from York to Frisia, the Pope gave all the authority he could use, and Pippin Peristal, seeing the political returns of the spiritual mission of Willibrod, gave him military protection, and enticed the heathen with presents to become Christians. The work was remarkably successful till Rodbad invaded the country, destroying the churches and monasteries and driving out the monks and priests. Charles Martel repulsed Rodbad and restored the true religion. With all the aid that could be given him, Willibrod was unable to conquer Independent Frisia as he had the Frankish part of Frisia, for the military aid was not sufficient. Boniface, having the powerful support of King and Pope, was able to accomplish a great work, but he gave his life undertaking to convert Independent Frisia, where he too lacked the converting power of the sword.

According to the traditions, it took Charlemagne thirty-three summers and thirty-three expeditions to convert the Saxons. Each summer the powerful prince converted these heathen with fire and sword, and they submitted to Christian baptism; but every winter,

when the larger part of the garrisons were withdrawn, the "Christian" heathen fell upon the priests and murdered or drove them from the country and burned the forts and monasteries. Finally Charlemagne butchered four thousand of them in the name of Christ, exiled about a third of the population, and the rest, profiting by the experience of these who continued to resist, finally became "Christians," that is, they submitted to Pope and Emperor, and were baptized.

The Scandinavian countries remained almost wholly heathen for a century and a half after the work of Ansgar, the apostle to the north. King Olaf Schooskoenig, the "Clovis of Sweden," became Christian, and King Inge made war on the idols. It was kings who converted Norway-Haakon the Good, Olaf Trygwassen, and Olaf Haraldsen. In Bulgaria the opposition to the evangelism of King Boris was "drowned in blood," and speedily the population was either Christian or dead. Honorius III called a crusade in 1217 A. D. against the stubborn Prussians who refused to become Christians. This method did not succeed. Then the Teutonic Knights were called upon to evangelize the country at the point of the sword. However, it required about half a century by slaughter and by colonization to make the country Christian.

About the year 1184 the monk Meinhard arrived at the Duna and promised to build the people a fortress if they would become Christians. They agreed. But, the fort built, they changed their minds. A crusade called by Pope Cœlestin was not heeded. The monk Berthold was sent later with an army; though he fell in battle his army was victorious and the people surrendered and were baptized. After the departure of the crusaders the Livonians jumped into the Duna and washed off their Christianity and returned to heathenism. Albrecht, nephew of the bishop of Bremen, was made bishop and granted a crusade. He raised an army known as "Knights of the Sword." Arriving at the mouth of the Duna about the year 1200, he began the evangelization of the peoples. After the population was decimated in large districts, the peoples submitted to Christ, the Esthonians about 1210, and the people of Courland fifteen years later. The duke of the Lithuanians was awarded the hand of the heiress of the throne of Poland for his decision to become a Christian. He went through his country destroying the idols and temples and rewarding the converts with woolen clothes. He was successful; but fifty years later the people sought to return to the old religion, which at heart they had never forsaken.

According to the form prescribed by the cruel and ecclesiastical authorities in Madrid, the Spanish explorers of America were directed to "declare to the natives":

> If you refuse, by the help of God [*sic*] we shall enter with force into your land, and shall make war against you in all ways and manners that we can, and subject you to the yoke and obedience of the church and of their Highnesses; we shall take you and your wives and your children, and make slaves of them, and sell and dispose of them as their Highnesses may command; and we shall take away your goods, and do all the mischief and damage we can, as to vassals who do not obey and refuse to receive their lord; and we protest that the deaths and losses that shall accrue from this are your own fault."[13]

The less cruel Turk offered three choices—conversion, tribute, or sword; the Spaniard only an alternative. The romance of the California missions is clouded a good deal for him who knows the significance of the universal proximity of the presidio to the mission.

Tears so blind our eyes we cannot follow the story further; and it comes too close home to us. There is no need to draw a moral. There are perfectly good historical reasons why Western Christianity has been in the mind of an increasing number of people the most

[13] L. W. Bacon, *History of American Christianity*, p. 9. Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

militaristic religion that the world has seen. Voltaire said that Christianity could not be the true religion, for the true religion was one of peace, and Christianity was a religion of war. Can any fair-minded, intelligent man fail to agree with him? Did any greater disaster ever befall the world than the transformation of the Prince of Peace into a God of War? Eusebius, the very appreciative biographer of Constantine, tells how the Emperor piously made a helmet for himself and a bit for the bridge of his favorite war-horse out of the nails of the cross of Christ, which his mother Helena discovered in Jerusalem. To us this is a very meaningful incident.

10. The Three Christs of the Middle Ages

The debt which civilization owes to the mediæval church cannot easily be exaggerated. A comparison of Europe at the close of the fifth century with that of the close of the fifteenth reveals a vast difference, and that development is due almost exclusively to the church. Whatever there were of agriculture, horticulture, architecture, literature, painting, sculpture, Europe owed most largely to the church. To the same institution was to be credited most of what there was of law and

order. Even in building roads and bridges and the repair of the same the church took the lead. Once again the church provided an outlook that included the whole of life. Oppression was restrained and slavery practically done away with. The church furnished saints for patrons of the industrial guilds and regulated the "just price." In knightly chivalry the three lessons of "Courage, Justice, and Loyalty" were taught. The worship of the Virgin dignified motherhood, and the worship of the Child did something to call out the tenderer emotions. Probably the church never did its work so well as in the Middle Ages; it certainly never did it so thoroughly. The great cathedrals, libraries, colleges, and hospitals are monuments to the greatness of the mediæval church. The situation offered opportunity which invited, in fact, almost compelled, the church to undertake the control of civilization. The church did its work only too well, doing everything for the people—including their thinking. Partly because of the love of priestly dominance and power, partly because of fear to release its hold on the people lest they go whither they should not, the church failed to provide for the coming of the people to maturity. Finally she lost her hold on the more vigorous peoples of Europe. For a long

while religion and culture had gone hand in hand, but the ossified traditional church was not elastic enough to continue the adjustment of the interpretation of religion (theology) to the thought of the times.

If the early church conquered Rome, no less is it true that, as so often happens, the conquered captured the conqueror. The mediæval church was thoroughly Roman. If the carefully and minutely integrated organization of the church making the Pope omnipresent in Christendom incarnates the Roman spirit, not one whit less, but even to a greater extent, do the theology, the culture, the ethics, and the whole spirit of the religion reveal the dominance of old pagan Rome in the mediæval church. The legal system of pagan Rome is perpetuated in the organization and the spirit of the Christian Church, which is juristic to the last detail. If the theology was Greek, it was Rome which decided the form, the practical implications, and the spirit of the doctrinal system. Every doctrine, every custom, every rite is a legal command. Belief is scarcely anything more or less than obedience to the church. Piety became the performance of the observances commanded by the church. Deeds of charity were performed for their legal equivalent to suffering due on account

of sin. Monastic austerities were endured for the "more exceeding and eternal weight of glory" which they purchased. All is external, formal, legal, forensic, realistic. The Eucharist (thank-offering) becomes an offering for the atonement of sin, repeating the sacrifice of Calvary, appeasing the wrath of God. The magical operations (*ex opere operato*) of the elements take away their moral and spiritual values. The sacraments work of themselves regardless of the state of mind and heart of the administrant and of the communicant. Form is taken for substance, symbolism for reality. Holiness becomes symbolic rather than actual. As in the Jewish Church at the time of Christ, ceremonial purity takes the place of moral cleanliness. The baptized are the counterpart of "the children of Abraham." The religion as a whole in the name of Jesus has become just what Jesus condemned in the Jewish Church.

In the family religion of the few peasants who were able to possess and knew how to read snatches of the Psalms and the Gospels in the catechisms, there was something resembling the religion of Jesus; but in the religion of the church there were few reminders of Jesus' religion save a few words, and even their meaning had an entirely different flavor. Where is the loving heavenly Father whose will

is the way of happiness, who desires all to find the way and live, in whose loving care we find strength and comfort? In mediæval religion people had very little to do with God save to call upon saints to protect them from the righteous wrath of a despot. No longer did people have direct access to him, nor did they so desire, seeing he is so august and stern a Creator and Governor of the world. Even in the worship of the church, which was meant to overawe the people into submission to the priests, God is largely ignored in comparison with the devotion shown to Mary and the saints. And how different is this dramatic and awe-inspiring worship from the simplicity of Jesus' talking and communing with the loving Father! The sin-polluted man of the mediæval church who is worthy of eternal reprobation has little in common with even the prodigal, for he, when he came to himself, arose and went to his father. Instead of advising people to grovel in humility, confess their unworthiness, and bow before divine wrath, Jesus said even to the profligate woman: "Arise, go thy way and sin no more. I do not condemn thee." The mediæval church followed Paul's rather than Jesus' teaching about marriage. While raising the institution to the dignity of a sacrament, they degraded it by

the Pauline rather than the Christian position of woman and by the insistence upon the superior sanctity of celibacy. The church followed Paul's asceticism rather than Jesus' wholesome view of life, and even exaggerated Paul's un-Christian teachings. Never in pre-Christian times did so earnest a teacher of religion so thoroughly escape asceticism as did Jesus; and not even yet has his church taken the attitude he took toward women and children. In mediæval theology the "world is the devil's and the fullness thereof." To Jesus this is the heavenly Father's house for us to live in, in which are many evils which Jesus did not undertake to explain; but he showed how to overcome them. The contrasts are legion. We shall consider only one more.

Although the church preserved the Gospels, she knew almost nothing of Jesus' manner of life. The kind of life he lived, as well as the teachings, all have something mysterious and symbolical about them. The interest was not in the earthly life of Jesus, how he took life, but in the vicarious effect of all he did, the things he did in order that we might not have to do them, to make up the legal equivalent in suffering for the punishment due to our sin. Jesus' humanity is now assumed by the di-

vinity and he is no longer one of us. There was no thought, therefore, that we should attempt to live as he did. His "way of life" is the provision which he has made so that we may "escape while inwardly neglecting" so great salvation.

Jesus' teachings are also practically unknown. His view of life is so different from the mediæval ideal that the exegete resorted to allegory. The teachings are symbolic. The simple and apparently plain and clear teachings are made into something mysterious and mystical having no relation to practical life.

Rabanus, in the introduction to his *Dictionary of Allegory*, tells how important it is to know how to interpret Scripture; when to employ the historical method leading to imitation of holiness; the allegorical, revealing truth; the tropological, instructing in morals; or the anagogical, leading to a desire of eternal felicity. Rabanus' *Dictionary* contains an extensive list of words with their symbolic meaning: "field" means the world; "friend" means Christ; "handmaid" signifies church; it requires about a dozen lines to list the various meanings of water including Christ, wisdom, loquacity, temporal greed, baptism, etc.

To the great African, Augustine, "David"

means desire of all nations in Christ; "Bathsheba" signifies well of satiety, or the church (in Canticles, "bride" means the church); while "Uriah" means my light of God; "Hittite" means cut off. "He, the desire of all nations [Christ], was enamored of the church cleansing herself in a bath on the roof, that is cleansing herself from the filth of the world . . . He [Christ] killed the devil [Uriah, the one cut off from the light of God], and joined himself to her [church] in perpetual marriage."

Honorius of Autun interprets the Pharisee who went up to the Temple to pray as the Jewish people who were near the altar; and the publican who stood afar off as the Gentiles, with whom God is pleased rather than the Jews. For him the man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho was our first parent who left Paradise and was surrounded by a swarm of demons who despoiled him. The priest who passed by was the order of Patriarchs who could not help; the Levite was the order of prophets who had sins enough of their own and could not save; the Samaritan was Christ. Taking the man to the inn means that Christ committed the doctrine of the law to the Order of Doctors. The two pennies are the good teaching and the good works of the Doctors.

The Middle Ages worshiped two Christs and

bowed in abject fear before a third; they worshiped the baby (Madonna) and the bleeding monk on the cross (crucifix) and cowed in dread fear of the King of Heaven who on "that day, that dreadful day" of wrath ("*dies illa dies irae*"), will come with flaming sword to judge the living and the dead. They knew practically nothing of Him who by his life and teachings has stirred the imagination of humanity. The Apostles' Creed by its omissions likewise belies Jesus. He was "born," "suffered," "died," "ascended" to his throne, and cometh to "judge," without a word concerning his teachings, or the kind of person he was, which give these other items their significance. Perhaps the greatest travesty is the lean, anæmic, woebegone monk on the cross worthy to be despised and rejected of men. It is the devil's worst lie about Jesus.

In a mediæval collection of hymns thirty-seven are addressed to Christ, one hundred ten to the Virgin, and one hundred eighty-nine to all other saints. Schaff reminds us that "if sacred poetry is any test of the devotion paid to a saint, then the Virgin Mary was far and away the chief person to whom worshipers looked for help."[14] There is a story of a

[14] *History of the Christian Church*, vol. iv, part ii, p. 745. Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

priest to whom Christ appeared and told him that his mother was much pleased with the priest's prayers and loved him very much, but would he please not to neglect to address some prayers to him also. Saint Bernard, who next to Saint Francis was the most devoted to Christ of the mediæval saints, says that the Virgin is mediator between Christ and the soul. In her is nothing severe or dreadful, for she is tender toward all. "If you are terrified by the thunders of the Father, go to Jesus; if you fear to go to Jesus, then run to Mary." Bonaventura also calls Mary the mediator between the soul and Christ. "God is fond of Revenge; Mary the Mother, of Compassion. She presents our petitions to Christ, softening his wrath, and winning his favor for us." Anselm prays, "Come to my aid and intercede for me, O Mother of God, to thy sweet Son, for me a sinner." In mediæval religion Jesus was one to be feared.

We do not always remember that Thomas à Kempis' famous book is entitled not only *On the Imitation of Christ*, but also, "And the Contempt for the Vanities of the World." The book is for monks in the convent, and shows on every page the influence on the author of the mediæval conception not only of Christianity, but also of Christ. All through the

book is the "plaintive minor key" emphasizing submission, humiliation, emptiness of love for the world, to the neglect of the stronger manly virtues of courage, loyalty to truth, and a life of active service. It was inevitable that this greatest mediæval attempt to return to Jesus should have been vitiated by monkery. Jesus was not yet understood. His "Father in heaven" was a dread sovereign; Jesus himself was as one to be feared, and so the people thought best to "run to Mary"; but even she was such an exalted and severely pure "Queen of Heaven" that many common people came to her through her mother, Sainte Anne, or one of the lesser saints. Perhaps the church is not to be blamed very severely for this travesty on Jesus' religion. There was a degree of inevitability about it. But they are to be blamed, and that severely, who in our day undertake to be leaders in religion without informing themselves of the preponderance of Græco-Roman paganism and Teutonic and Celtic heathenism in mediæval Christianity and in the present-day Greek and Roman Catholic Churches. Would it have been possible for Protestantism entirely to escape this paganism and heathenism and to return fully to the Jesus religion?

11. Paul Rather Than Jesus in the Reformation

When Greek literature became known in the Renaissance period it was revolutionary. Something of the freedom, the revelry of the ancients in the great out-of-doors, the joyous appreciation of natural and human beauty, their venturesome confidence in the ability of the mind to reach truth and of the soul to appreciate spiritual graces, came into the gloom of the mediæval sense of sin, ascetic humiliation of man, and distrust of human nature, like a cooling, refreshing, and invigorating breeze. Ulrich von Hutten's exclamation was typical. "Oh, what a century! Souls are awakening; it is a joy [*es ist ein lust*] to be alive."

In Southern Europe the Renaissance was a revelry. In the more serious-minded Northern Europe, the mind traveled quickly to the Greek New Testament. It was Colet lecturing at Oxford who turned the attention of Erasmus from classical to New Testament Greek. It was the study of the Greek Testament which revealed the enormous difference between the church of the times and that of the apostolic age. Just as the Renaissance turned the mind to the classics, so the minds of the theologians were turned in the same spirit to the Bible—the ancient Christian classic. As scholars began

to compare the Latin of the monks and theologians with that of the ancient classic models, so the theologians began to compare the religion of the time with that of the ancient church. Despite all the evils of the church, and all the resentment of rulers of the interference of foreign power in the politics of their realms, and the economic effect of the drain of the gold of various countries into the profligate and luxurious court of Rome, the Reformation would not have been possible but for the Greek New Testament.

The reformers only began to put into practice the old doctrine of the supreme place of the Scriptures, which the Roman Catholic Church had diluted by placing tradition and the infallibility of the church on a par with Scripture. The reformers, however, Luther, Melanchthon, Calvin, Zwingli, and others, gave human reason and natural revelation large places in their systems. Luther was willing to listen "to the clear light of reason." Calvin taught that natural revelation was sufficient, so that the natural man is without excuse. Melanchthon placed revelation and reason side by side. But the followers of the reformers soon lost sight of the liberalism of the great creative geniuses who began the movements for reform. Ere long the Bible is not only the

sole guide, but all ecclesiastical arrangements not specifically authorized by Scripture are condemned. Some, following the lead of Buxtorf, came to believe in the divine inspiration of the vowel points of the Hebrew text.

It is needless to point out that such Biblicism makes impossible a proper appreciation of Jesus. In such a view the Gospels are not allowed to speak for themselves, but are read in the light of the rest of the Bible. The Gospels are brought down to the level of the teachings of the primitive Old Testament heroes. Jesus is measured by the limitations of Paul, and even by pre-Christian Old Testament characters.

It was not Jesus but Paul who was the hero of the Reformation, and the Paul of Augustine rather than the Paul of the Acts and the Epistles. The reformers were all far more traditional than they knew. Augustine was the patron saint of Luther's order, the Augustinians, and also of the department of theology in which he taught at the University of Wittenberg. It was a text quoted by Paul from the Old Testament that removed from Luther's shoulders a terrible torturing burden of sin, "The just man shall live by his faith." It is no wonder that Luther was so devoted to the great apostle. He judged the value of all Scripture not by the teachings and spirit of

Jesus, but by Paul's doctrine of justification by faith. It was because James seemed to Paul so little in harmony with this doctrine that he called James "a straw epistle." Whether Moses wrote the Pentateuch or not was no great concern, Luther said. What was of concern to him was Paul's comforting doctrine relieving him of torturous anxiety about his soul and assuring him of heaven.

The whole Calvinistic system—doctrine, polity, discipline, and its semi-ascetic type of piety—is clearly Jewish and Pauline rather than Jesusinian. There is nothing of predestination or foreordination in the Gospels; they are exaggerations of Paul, clearly. Reprobation and Calvin's whole doctrine of man reveal the influence of Augustine and Paul, and are at the opposite pole from Jesus' appreciation of the goodness in even the worst sinner. Paul, as interpreted by Augustine, and the Old Testament are the sources of Calvin's doctrine of God. Of such an arbitrary Despot, wrathfully righteous, exacting the full penalty, requiring mediators and atonement, Jesus knew nothing.

It would be quite erroneous to suppose that the reformers would be able to turn to the Scriptures and build their faith upon them. The reformers were theologians and students of history, and so were traditionalists. Luther

believed that his theses stated the pure Catholic doctrine. Melanchthon said, "In the true faith I include the whole doctrine handed down in the books of the prophets and apostles and comprehended in the Apostles', Nicene, and Athanasian creeds." We should think he might have included the teachings of Jesus.

The reformers were mediæval not only in their creeds, but also in their failure to take account of the rising new sciences. They shared and perhaps increased the suspicion of the mediæval mind regarding the dangers of human reason. In time Protestants became as much opposed to modern progress as Catholics. In their attitude toward truth they were authoritarians and supernaturalists. They went to the Fathers for their conception of Christ rather than to the Gospels. They followed the traditions of the ancient Greek Fathers and found their interest not in Jesus, but in the Logos. They shared not in the broad liberality of Jesus who would not interfere if some who were not following him were casting out devils, but they followed the traditions of those who for an iota fought with sticks and stones and swords. At the conference at Marburg in the fall of 1529 the Lutherans, Calvinists, and Zwinglians were able to agree upon fourteen and a half points, but the other half point, the

nature of the Presence in the Eucharist, caused Luther to refuse the hand of Zwingli and declare that the Zwinglians were of another spirit else they would see the (Luther's) truth. The Christian virtues of friendliness, brotherhood, good will were sacrificed with alacrity for a half point of doctrine. The Renaissance and the Reformation discovered Paul afresh; but the doctrines and practices of the church and the spirit of the times were so directly contrary to the teachings and spirit of Jesus that it was not possible to understand or appreciate Him who was still so far ahead of the time.

In the case of Luther it was partly because his experience and Paul's were so similar that Paul exercised greater influence over Luther than did the Gospels.

> The great African [Augustine] often helped [Luther] in a real way, as did his Wittenberg friends, to understand Paul, for in Paul, who has been guided to grace by law, he [Luther] found his own experiences repeated. The Lutheran Church from the very first received a Pauline coloring.[15]

Calvin is constantly falling back upon Paul in justification of his doctrine. In defense of his statement that "Eternal life is foreordained for some and eternal damnation for others,"[16]

[15] H. von Schubert, *Outlines of Church History*, p. 252. Reprinted by permission of G. P. Putnam's Sons.

[16] *Institutes, iii*, xxi, 5.

irrespective of human merit, he says, "Let our conclusion be to stand astonished with Paul—'O man, who art thou that repliest against God?'" Calvin is constantly using such expressions as "with Paul" and "as Augustine says." Calvin in his *Institutes* makes twenty-one references to Mark and two hundred seventy-seven to Romans. He refers to the Old Testament almost as much as to the New; three times as much to the Epistles of Paul as to all three of the synoptic Gospels; and as many references to Moses alone as to the historical Gospels. To all the reformers Christianity is Pauline rather than Jesusinian.

To return to considerable extent to Paul and the Apostolic Age was a great gain over the traditions of the mediæval Catholic Church. It was a movement in the direction of the gospel of Jesus but it fell far short of that gospel.

12. Protestant Scholasticism and its Unacquaintance With Jesus

The Protestant Reformation was not primarily a change in doctrine. When Luther wrote his theses he supposed that he was only stating the true Catholic doctrine from which the church was departing and which the indulgence venders were abusing. Melanchthon, the

great Lutheran systematic theologian, said, "We have brought into the church no new doctrine, but we renew and illustrate the doctrine of the Catholic Church." He was a traditionalist and appreciated the work of the early church Fathers and held to the early creeds of the church: "In the true faith I include the whole doctrine handed down in the books of the prophets and apostles and comprehended in the Apostles', the Nicene, and the Athanasian creeds."

An examination of the Calvinistic and Lutheran creeds and catechisms shows that Luther and Melanchthon were right. The same Oriental potentate for a God, the creation of the world in six days, the Garden of Eden; the sin and fall of man, with physical death resulting; the God-Man who suffered to appease the wrath of God, supernatural origin and guidance of the church; the sacraments, with minor changes in detail, but the same general attitude toward them; the real presence in the Eucharist, and the general scheme of theology, were all taken over.

The traditional attitude to theology was maintained by the leading reformers who themselves were theologians. Melanchthon even goes so far as to say that the true church is "composed of those who hold the pure doctrine

and agree in it." The place of doctrine in the reformed churches, both the Lutheran and the Calvinistic, was greater than with the Roman Catholics. In the case of the reformed churches it was the one great requirement, while in the other, doctrine shared in a number of emphases, including confession, fasting, the meritorious value of presence at the mass, and a great number of observances. There were in Protestant theology the same mediæval demand for authority, the same distrust of human reason, and the same opposition to the new sciences. Equally prominent is the large measure of traditional identification of faith with a body of doctrine.

Incessant controversy was the inevitable result of this stressing of creeds. At the Marburg Conference Luther threatened to "let fly at Zwingli's snout," and at the end, as the conference broke up, he refused Zwingli's proffered hand. In the Peace of Augsburg no place was made for the toleration of Zwinglians or Calvinists. In the Thirty Years' War Lutherans and Calvinists did not stand together till it began to become evident that all would be lost if they did not unite their forces; and when they co-operated it was, after all, merely each party fighting for its own life. Lutherans had acrimonious controversy among themselves too,

as did the Calvinists. Within ten years from the death of Luther, the following controversies raged: the Adiaphoristic, Majoristic, Antinomian, Synergistic, Osiandrian, Eucharistic, and others. The same bitterness, harshness, and lack of brotherly love are to be noted in the controversies as raged of old among the early Greek Christians. Even in the Sunday services of the church moral and religious values were subordinated to hair-splitting controversial disquisitions and acrimonious recriminations.

Biblicism is perhaps more in evidence among Protestants than among Catholics. The Bible is divine legislation; the gospel is still largely law; and the interpretation is also traditional. Theoretically each man is to interpret the Scriptures guided by the Holy Spirit, but woe unto the man who is guided into some interpretation different from that of Luther or Calvin, according to the denomination to which he belonged. This biblical doctrine and legislation is an external authority, an objective standard, fully divine and in no sense human, dictated through men as amanuenses and infallible in history and science as well as in theology, religion, and morals. Protestantism is a religion of a Book, even more so than Catholicism, and it was a closed Book. Any further divine revelation was to be a divinely inspired interpretation of

the Book. No really new light could break on the life and teachings of Jesus until modern scientific historical criticism had done its work of showing progress in divine revelation and revealing culmination in Jesus, by whom all the Bible is to be measured, making an end of bringing the gospel down to the level of the primitive parts of the Old Testament, or even to a level with the rest of the New Testament, making Paul the equal of Jesus as a teacher of religion. If the Renaissance made the Reformation possible by calling attention to the ancient Christian classic, the Bible, it also, strange as it may seem, confirmed the Protestant churches in their traditionalism by emphasizing the value of the early church Fathers and the authority of the ancient Christian standards, as in intellectual and literary matters it made the ancient classics standard.

Theology had now become entirely a new controversial form of Scholasticism, the church a preaching institution and school, church government a bureaucracy. Sympathy with the soul of the people which sat every Sunday in the church and knew the catechism by heart was lost, and with it in an increasing degree the power to influence moral life. Religion was a thing apart, something performed at different hours, particularly on Sunday.[17]

[17] H. von Schubert, *Outlines of Church History*, p. 290. Reprinted by permission of G. P. Putnam's Sons.

This period of Protestant Scholasticism continued practically through the eighteenth century; indeed, it is not altogether dead yet, as the recent Fundamentalist flurry has indicated. During these three centuries since the Reformation the outlook upon the world has completely changed, while religion was tied up with, almost identified with, a mediæval view of the world which in turn was biblical, that is, that of the early Old Testament times. (Compare mediæval cosmogony with that of the book of Genesis.) The whole modern world has risen since the Reformation, and yet millions continue to look back to Luther and Calvin. It would be a comedy were it not so great a tragedy. It would seem that no man living in this twentieth century would look to a man as guide in spiritual things who says that hail, thunder, lightning, and other natural phenomena are caused by devils:

> Many devils are in the woods, in waters, in wildernesses, and in dark, pooly places ready to hurt and prejudice the people. Some are also in the thick black clouds which cause hail, lightnings, thunderings, and poison the air, the pastures, and the grounds. When these things happen then the philosophers and physicians say it is natural.

There are perfectly good reasons why religion was at its lowest ebb in the eighteenth century, so low that there were many predictions of

its extinction in the near future. Nearly all modern sciences had arisen, but religion wore the old garb of the mediæval times. The Pietistic movement in Germany, the Quaker mysticism in England, and the Wesleyan Revival, which was modern in that it laid emphasis on experience, saved Christianity from extinction. Romanism, true to its genius, was tied up with the fate of political absolutism. This is one of the reasons for the various conflicts with the Roman Catholic Church which every modern Catholic state has had in the nineteenth century when the people have undertaken to claim their liberties. The disestablishment of the Roman Catholic Church has taken place in nearly every progressive Catholic country because it was identified with absolutism. Protestantism, being a lay as well as a priestly religion, has been able much more easily to shift its political loyalties. These political uses of the church have done something toward preserving Christianity from extinction. But vital religion had no place in the thought of the eighteenth century. A man could be intelligent and an infidel, or ignorant and religious.

There was not much of the evangelical note in the natural religion of the eighteenth-century Deists; but Deism was something. Before

the century was past, however, even the religion of the Deists was made largely untenable. Bishop Butler, in his *Analogy*, undertook to show the Deists that there were no more difficulties in revealed religion than in the natural. The net result of his effort was not to lead the Deists to orthodoxy, but to show them the shortcomings of natural religion. If Bishop Butler, trying to save religion, helped to destroy it, it was Hume who really gave the death blow to the religion of the time for the intelligent man, in his posthumously published book, *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*. The present world is imperfect. Hume argued that we have no certainty that any will be. Can we reason from an imperfect world to a perfect Creator? Rewards and punishments are not according to deserts here; why reason that they ever will be? The universe may be self-existent. Order may be a property of matter as well as of mind. How can we reason from a finite world to an infinite Creator? Take this world as it is, should we infer that the Creator was good, bad, or perhaps more likely indifferent to morals as is nature? Is the Creator still alive or dead long since? Doctor McGiffert says, "The victory was won, so far as there was any, . . . over the orthodox apologists and the Deists by the

skeptics, of whom Hume was the greatest . . . That religious faith still survived was due, not to the apologists, but to altogether different influences, of which the great evangelical revival was the most important."[18]

Inasmuch as man is "incurably religious," some men in the eighteenth century left religion entirely to the church, asking the priests to take good care of their souls; others, not being able to fit Christian thought into any rational system, preferred a supernaturalism; and still others frankly supported religion in order to keep the masses in quiet subjection. "Free-thinking for the classes and superstition for the masses" seemed advantageous.

If religion is identified largely with theology, and if that theology is bound up with a certain philosophical and scientific view of the world, a warfare between theology and science and between organized religion and science is inevitable, and religion will as surely be opposed to progress. The opposition of the church to progress has been in proportion as it has failed to follow the religion of Jesus.

[18] *Protestant Thought Before Kant*, p. 248. Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

CHAPTER TWO

CHAPTER II

SCIENCE, HISTORY, AND THE NEW DISCOVERY AND APPRECIATION OF JESUS

13. Beginnings of Appreciation of Jesus

In the nineteenth century, during which, according to eighteenth-century predictions, Christianity was to become extinct, the religion made the greatest and in every way the most remarkable progress of any century of its history. Instead of dying the religion was revived both in Europe and in America and was carried unto the uttermost parts of the world. Christian population now numbers more than one third (535 millions) of the population of the globe (1,545 millions). It outnumbers the combined adherents of Brahmanism (214 millions), Mohammedanism (175 millions), Buddhism (121 millions) and Jews (11 millions). In the United States church membership has leaped from seven in a hundred of the population in 1800 to fifteen in a hundred in 1850, and more than 24 in a hundred in 1900.

So far in the twentieth century there has been a gradual slowing down of the gains in church membership. This has been due to a

number of causes, among which are to be rated rather conspicuously the controversies which have disturbed a number of denominations. These dissensions have not been of the nature of individual heresy trials so much as mass movements against widespread tendencies to reinterpret religious experience in modern terms. These unfortunate controversies have wasted energies which should have gone into aggressive religious work, and in some quarters have brought the church into disrepute. There are indications now that the peak of these disturbances has been passed.

The numerical increase of Christianity in the nineteenth century is less remarkable than its revived missionary activity, its educational service, its humanitarian work, its religious education of the young, the revolution in its doctrinal statements, its recovery of the spirit of toleration, the beginnings of a new harmony of religion and culture severed since the Renaissance period, a partial recovery of the social implications of the gospel, and at least a good beginning of a recovery of the long-lost historical Jesus. More remarkable than all these achievements is the saturation of society with the humanitarian spirit, as is revealed by a comparison of the indescribable bestiality of the Thirty Years' War with the popular

condemnation of atrocities real or supposed in the World War and the appeal which each combatant made for the approval of the public opinion of the world of its treatment of its foes. A comparison of the two sieges of Liège (by Charles the Bold in 1467–68, and by the Germans in 1914) is a sufficient indication of the progress made in humanitarianism.

This remarkable growth of Christianity was due most largely to the great revivals which swept England and America. The gains were made possible also by changes in the attitude of science toward truth, especially in its becoming less dogmatic and far more open-minded, and less certain that there is no room for mind and spirit in the universe. In spite of all these favorable circumstances, religion would not have made the progress it did but for the application of the scientific spirit to the study of Christianity itself, emancipating it from servitude to an ancient and no longer possible view of the world, and relieving it of the burden of Biblicism which was confusing the religion of Jesus with that of the primitive Hebrew people and with that of the apostle Paul by so far as he differs from Jesus. In fact, it can be shown convincingly that the great revivals, while adding many to the churches, also widened the breach between

religion and intelligence by championing a theology which was bound hand and foot to an impossible view of the world. Jonathan Edwards, for example, noted the very ready acceptance of the newer views in religion by people who were more inclined to rationalism than religion. He interpreted this fact to mean that the moderate views themselves exercised this deleterious influence. Accordingly, in the supposed interest of religion, he turned from the direction in which the best religious thought, including his own, had been tending. This reactionary conservatism made no small contribution to the infidelity of the end of the eighteenth century. This was more true in the case of the Edwardsian Revival than in that of the Wesleyan.

Jonathan Edwards was one of the very greatest intellects whom America has produced. He came independently to the Berkleyan position in philosophy. He became frightened at his own eminence; and supposing that modern ideas were undermining evangelical religion, turned from philosophy to theology and religion. This master intellect championed Calvinism in the supposed interests of piety. He ran the full gamut of Calvinism to its logical conclusion, and by so doing convinced common-sense people who had some degree

of humanity that there was little or no truth in Christianity. In a volume of Edwards' sermons picked up at random the following topics are noted in the first half of the book: "Man's natural blindness to things of religion," "Man naturally God's enemy," "Final Judgment," "Justification of God in the damnation of sinners," "Future punishment of the wicked unavoidable and intolerable," "The eternity of hell torments," "Wrath upon the wicked to the uttermost," "The end of the wicked contemplated by the righteous; or, the torments of the wicked in hell no occasion of grief to the saints in heaven," "Wicked men useful in their destruction only," "Sinners in the hands of an angry God"; and there we stopped. In the sermon on "The end of the wicked contemplated by the righteous," etc., Edwards says that "They [the saints] will have no love nor pity for them [sinners in hell]", because "the justice of God will be glorified," and because the saints will have a "greater sense of their own happiness." Only one text in the first half of the volume was taken from the Gospels and that was, "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." Edwards has little use for Jesus and his teachings, but, not understanding Jesus' teaching of love and forgiveness beyond justice, he has great need for a

suffering Christ to make it possible for God to be just and yet justify sinners. In a volume of twenty-nine sermons we find three texts taken from the Gospels; the Golden Rule for a sermon which he was asked to preach on slavery; instead of discussing the narrow way to life he prefers to cite the broad way that leads to destruction; the other text was "By their fruits ye shall know them." This gospel of dread fear preached by this masterly intellect terrified the simple country folk into servile submission to the "angry God." For a time there was much concern for religion, but the reaction was disastrous, as were the results in the long run when people with some degree of common sense and humanity turned to infidelity rather than to such a gospel.

In the other American revivals, which have come about every alternate decade down till the time of Moody, the human side of the gospel has found increasing expression, till at the present time even popular revivalists dare to place among their mottoes, "Saved for service." Although that service is interpreted in a pretty narrow sense it has no little significance. The theological Christ is still to the fore, but there is a growing although still a small appreciation of Jesus and his gospel.

The gospel of John Wesley is surprisingly

modern and true to the spirit of Jesus. He, however, accepted the traditional doctrines of the mediæval church as did the reformers, the pietists, and the Protestant Scholastics. In a letter to a Roman Catholic, Wesley calls attention to his orthodoxy regarding the doctrines of God, Christ, man, and salvation. He emphasized even more strongly than traditional theology the importance of the doctrine of the fall, which rendered man incapable not only of following but knowing the truth. But doctrine was not the main thing with Wesley. In his *Character of a Methodist* he says, "The distinguishing marks are not his opinions of any sort; his assent to this or that scheme of religion, . . . his espousing the judgment of one man over another, . . . nor customs nor actions, . . . nor laying store upon any particular part of religion," but 'love of the Lord shed abroad in his heart," "God the joy of his heart," "happiness in God," "doing good to all men," "keeping the commandments." In his *Journal*, May 18, 1788, he writes that among Presbyterians, Anabaptists, Quakers, and others, all must hold the same opinions and believe in some one mode of worship, adding: "The Methodists alone do not insist on your holding this or that opinion, but they think and let think. Neither do they impose any

particular mode of worship, but you may continue to worship in your former manner, be that what it may." Nevertheless, Wesley had opinions, and they were the traditional ones. He made no contribution to the new theology directly, but by his emphasis on experience he prepared the way for it. He was modern in stressing experience in an age of empirical science. In this, he was one with the Catholic Quietists, the German mystics and pietists, the Moravians, and the Quakers.

Wesley's great original contribution was his break with the notion that Christianity is rational to the last degree and can be proven by dialectical arguments. This idea, contributed by the early Greek theologians, came down the stream of Christian tradition, approved by the mediæval Scholastics, the reformers and by the contemporary rationalists of Wesley's time. True, Locke had said that in Christianity there were things above reason though not contrary to reason, but John Toland objected that this made room for all sorts of errors and superstitions within the boundaries of "revealed" Christianity. Locke would have traditional religion accepted not on faith or from experience, but on pure assumption. Wesley differed in that he broke with rationalism, both of the skeptic and the or-

thodox sort, declaring that by the natural man Christian truth not only cannot be discovered but cannot even be understood. This was in flat contradiction to the commonly accepted opinion that religion must appeal to the reason of every man else it is not from God and not true. In his *Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion,* he says,

> It is necessary that you have the hearing ear and the seeing eye, . . . that you have a new class of senses opened to your soul, not depending on organs of flesh and blood, to be the evidence of things not seen, as your bodily senses are of things visible; to be the avenues to the invisible world, to discern spiritual objects, and to furnish you with ideas which the outward eye hath not seen, . . . and till you have these internal senses, till the eyes of your understanding are open, you can have no proper understanding of divine things, . . . no just idea of them.

This doctrine of the sixth sense, the eye of faith given of God in the experience of religion, emancipates religion from the necessity of being interpreted in terms of current thought, but it was dangerously liable to lead to obscurantism. However, it was well for the time being, for the thought of the day would not permit any great degree of disharmony with traditional religion. However, this was a double-edged sword; if it cut the ground from under the rationalists, who had only a deistic, not an

evangelical, religion, it also failed to inspire attempts to reinterpret Christianity by people who did have vital religion; it confirmed people in their traditionalism, led to obscurantism, and so made its contribution, after all, to the infidel movement in the latter part of the century. It must be said, however, that this doctrine of Wesley was the beginning of the modern movement toward giving religious phenomena their own legitimate and independent value, something to be taken into account in one's total view of the universe. Since Wesley, Schleiermacher, and James, never again for the intelligent man will religion be dependent upon any scientific theory or philosophical system, however much it may seem desirable to interpret religion in terms of current thought for the sake of making it intelligible and appealing.

In his doctrine of Christ Wesley is traditional, emphasizing the divinity and largely ignoring the humanity in traditional manner. In his sermon, "On Knowing Christ After the Flesh," he says: "We know him no more as a man. . . . We do not think of him as a man, or love him under that character"; "We do not think, act, speak with regard to our blessed Lord as a mere man." He objects strongly to the use of "dear Lord," "dear Saviour." Wesley refers

to him as "God blessed forever," "sole Creator," "Author of all motion," "End of all things," "true God," "Very God of very God." Once again, all this is traditional with Wesley, but practically he has a much more human Christ and has much to do with the Jesus of the Gospels, as well as with the traditional Christ. Taking up a volume of sermons at random to compare with one of Edwards', one is struck with the thirteen sermons on the "Sermon on the Mount." He is constantly preaching on the Love of God in striking contrast with Edwards' predilection for the terror and wrath of God. He preached a sermon "On Love" at Savannah in 1736, and many more during his long ministry. In his "Earnest Appeal to Men of Reason and Religion" he says: "This love [of God] we believe to be the medicine of life, . . . the never-failing remedy for all the evils of a disordered world, for the miseries and vices of men. . . . This religion we long to see established in the world, a religion of love and joy and peace having its seat in the inmost soul, but ever showing itself by its fruits. . . . in every kind of beneficence spreading virtue and happiness all around." How modern the following sounds!—"Show your love for Christ by keeping his commandments. . . . Honor Christ by obeying him. . . . Glorify

Christ by imitating Christ in all things, by walking as he walked." Wesley's interpretation of Jesus' gospel is in rather marked contrast with the monkishness of Thomas à Kempis' *Imitation of Christ*, and varies still further from the legalism of the early Latin Fathers, who say, "By alms the sinner renders to God suitable satisfaction" (Cyprian); "By temporal affliction eternal punishments are expurged" (Tertullian); and "By continence thou shalt negotiate a great substance of sanctity; by parsimony of the flesh thou shalt acquire the Spirit" (Tertullian).

Surely, there are in Wesley the beginnings of a modern appreciation of Jesus. Theoretically he is mediæval, practically he is modern. In his theology he has almost exclusively a divine Christ, but practically he had also as much of a social gospel as the state of the science of sociology permitted. He has also a human Jesus, at least to an extent unprecedented since the early church. Modern efforts at social ameliorations take their rise out of the Wesleyan Revival. The social and religious results of his movement doubtless, as has been often said, saved England from a French Revolution, and did more than any other one thing to prevent the predicted extinction of Christianity.

14. The Religious Declaration of Independence—the Scientific Validity of Religious Phenomena

The revivals with their limited appreciation of Jesus did most to save the Christian religion; but if the emancipation of religion from dependence upon any particular intellectual system, whether scientific, philosophical, or theological, had not taken place, Christianity would not have entirely disappeared from the earth as was predicted in the eighteenth century, but it would at most have become magic in the Roman Catholic sacraments and sacramentals and superstition among ignorant and uninfluential Protestants. There have ever been people who had had their own personal experiences of religion quite independently of any particular system of thought; but only in our generation has religion in theory been made independent of a view of the world. Not since the apostolic age has religion found intellectual justification apart from an intellectual system. For the first time in Christian history have religious phenomena demanded to be given their own place among other phenomena as data to be studied for their own validity and worth. The study of religion has been made a science. Among the phenomena to be considered in one's total view of

the universe are the religious feelings and experiences. Even if psychology and natural science allowed no possible place for the divinity of the human spirit, the religious man for the first time may reply, and that *intelligently*, that he has data which contradict the findings of the psychologists and the other scientists, that his phenomena must be taken into account in the total view of the universe, and that they who rule God out of the universe must modify their hypotheses. Fortunately, there is, or at least there need be, no such sharp conflict as this at the present time. Science has become far more open-minded and much less dogmatic within the past few decades, as we shall note below, and there are schools of psychology which are not mechanistic. The conflict was sharp, however, in the eighteenth century, and there was no way out but infidelity for the intelligent man, or, rather, for the man who insisted on being consistently intelligent, for religion was still tied up with and rose or fell with the infallible authority of the Bible and a certain view of the world which at that time was still mediæval. Since the Renaissance period, when there took place a cleavage between religion and modern culture, it is only in our time that religion can be interpreted in ways according well with current thought.

The story of the emancipation of religion from an unfortunate servitude is a long one, and the details are intricate and difficult; but the main outline perhaps may be made clear with but a brief treatment of the subject. It is very largely a nineteenth-century accomplishment, but the roots run back into the eighteenth, and the ramifications are numerous. Pietism on the Continent was a reaction from the crassness of Protestant scholasticism. The pietist found his satisfaction in meditative, mystical, and emotional experiences of religion. He accepted the creeds but paid them little attention. Indeed, he gave them so little thought that unconsciously he was preparing the way for the coming infidel movement, for he, who had a vital religion, did not reinterpret his experiences in terms of the thought current at the time. The same must be said of the Evangelical Revival. Wesley for the most part was a traditionalist. He was remarkably broad and liberal and intellectually sympathetic, was unusually free from contentiousness, but he did not undertake any restatement of Christian belief, at least as a whole. His interest did not lie in the intellectual field, although one must believe from reading his works that he was one of the best-informed men of his time. His religion was practically not de-

pendent upon an intellectual system, although theoretically Wesley himself thought it was; he thought, for example, that the whole of religion would be lost if the doctrine of the fall of man were given up. However, by emphasizing religious experience Wesley, like the mystics and the pietists, was preparing the way for the emancipation of religion, for, although, unfortunately, he included a system of doctrine in his religion, he recognized that religion is much more than a theology. To him faith does not have so much to do with truth as with the spirit of God himself.

The Romanticist movement in philosophy, literature, and the fine arts had a very important place in the process we are considering. Romanticism is comparable with pietism and evangelicalism. As they were revolts from Protestant Scholasticism, so Romanticism was a reaction from extreme intellectualism. Once again among refined and intelligent people the feelings were given their proper place. This movement manifested itself most clearly in the appreciation of beauty, especially in nature and in the human form. Love of nature, trust in nature, a mystical worship of nature, together with a new sense of the greatness and dignity of man, characterized the movement.

It can readily be seen that this Romanticist

movement is but another aspect of pietism and evangelicalism, and that the movement as a whole was another eighteenth-century preparation for the nineteenth-century emancipation of religion.

Perhaps the first to state the issue clearly was the great biblical scholar, Semler, of Halle, who, as Hurst says, "when, while yet a student, he drew the subtle distinction between theology and religion, he in that act gave the parting hand to evangelical faith."[1] The first real emancipator, however, was Immanuel Kant, who after he had hopelessly, it seemed, destroyed the traditional proofs for God and had come to an extremely agnostic position in his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), built up a new system on an almost entirely new basis in his *Critique of Practical Reason* (1788). He was the first of a line of philosophers, Schleiermacher, Ritschl, James, and a large group of the experimental school of theologians, who held that the intellectual approach to truth is not the only one; thus breaking with the intellectualism which had held sway in Christianity since the time of the ancient Greek theologians.

Kant arrived at God, freedom, and Immor-

[1] John F. Hurst, *History of Rationalism*, p. 128.

tality in this way: I ought means I can. I can means superiority to the natural world. Therefore I am free. Complete conformity of the will to the moral law is not accomplished in this life, but involves endless progression; hence immortality. The harmony of nature with the natural law, the correspondence of happiness and virtue, implies a Being who is over and beyond happiness and virtue, nature and the moral law, and who has arranged the correspondence. This Being is good, for in arranging the correspondence of happiness and virtue he shows his supreme interest in virtue. God is good, therefore, and to be revered for his holiness. Kant's significance lies not in the correctness of his philosophy, but in his giving the emotions and the volitions a place in his scheme of the totality of things, and his arguing for moral cause and effect. The same may be said of Fichte with his egoistic monism and moral optimism, and Schelling, who thought it necessary for souls possessing spiritual vision intuitively to grasp the reality which is behind both the ego and the non-ego and which, in a pantheistic way, is the ground of them both.

Hegel broke into this succession of thinkers who, he thought, were not giving pure reason its proper place, but were dethroning it by

exalting the emotions. Schleiermacher is in the line of succession and did more to emancipate religion than them all combined. He was one of the great and powerful figures in the history of Christianity. He was an apostle to the indifferent. His *Lectures on Religion to Those Who Have Little Concern For It,* which was the subject of his largely attended course in Berlin, together with Dwight's lectures to Yale students in America, and Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection* in England, marked the beginning of the end of the infidel movement and the beginning of the recovery of Christianity. Schleiermacher was greatly influenced by the Romanticist movement and by the pietists (his mother was one), as well as by his teacher, Immanuel Kant. His "feeling of dependence" upon God may be compared with Kant's categorical imperative. He believed that the feeling of oneness with God gave far more certainty than could be obtained by pure reason. He would not undervalue doctrine or religious practices, and certainly not morals; but religion is none of these, nor all of them; but, rather, consciousness of the All and our immediate relation to him. "The conception of God as one single being outside of the world and behind the world is not the beginning and the end of religion. . . . The true nature of

religion is neither this idea nor any other, but the immediate consciousness of the Deity as he is found in ourselves and in the world."[2] Jesus Christ differs from all other men in his sinless perfection and in the completeness of his God-consciousness. So then is he the one perfect revelation of God. His mission is to impart to us or induce in us his God-consciousness. All men are divine because more or less conscious of their relation to God, but Jesus was controlled by this consciousness. He is our Saviour in that he awakens in us our sense of oneness with God by his own manifestation of at-one-ness. As we come into contact with Jesus we become at one with God and have the victory over sin. It will be noted that here is a real salvation and not a fictitious one—a real saving from sin through Christ.

If Schleiermacher finds a larger place for Jesus than did Kant, so Coleridge found proof for Scripture also through inward experiences. "Whatever finds me bears witness to itself that it has proceeded from the Holy Spirit. In the Bible there is more that finds me than in all the books that I have read." Albrecht Ritschl in Germany, Matthew Arnold in Eng-

[2] *On Religion*, p. 101, Oman's translation. Reprinted by permission of George Routledge and Sons, Ltd., London.

land, and William James in America carry to its logical conclusion this trend of thought.

Then Starbuck, at Stanford University, began the scientific assembling and sorting of religious phenomena, which was the beginning of the psychological study of religion in the scientific spirit. About the same time Henry Drummond, President Schurman of Cornell University, Lyman Abbott, William North Rice, and many others began to interpret for the intelligent man the religious values of the larger conception of the universe as revealed in astronomy and evolution.

Let it be noted that this was not a return to intellectualism or authoritarianism, for these men were not basing religion upon any sort of scientific view of the world, or concocting a religion out of the findings of the scientists, but they were grounding religion on the new basis of experience, and were illustrating it and interpreting it and showing its consistency with modern thought.

Through the work of these modern prophets and apostles of faith who furnished new proofs of Christianity on an entirely new basis, while the revivalists were doing their popular work of reclaiming literally millions of people for the church and for religion, the Christian religion made the most remarkable progress in

the nineteenth century of any single century since the time of Jesus.

The best of it is that this emancipation of religion from a theory about a plan of salvation inaugurated by divine fiat, and placing it on a basis of reality, makes possible the evaluation of everything connected with religion according to its real worth to the religious life. Thus Jesus becomes not a theory, a necessity of thought, a necessary part of a plan of salvation, through a substitutionary theory of atonement, but he too becomes evaluated according to his actual worth as an example, an incentive, and a power in the life for practical living. Attention is thus drawn to the Gospel stories of the life and teachings of Jesus. In other words, this whole movement makes the recovery of Jesus' gospel a possibility.

An unforeseen by-product of this movement in religious thought, and one which, after all, is of tremendous significance for the progress of civilization, is that such churches as accept this point of view cease to oppose the progress of the sciences. As yet, however, only a few of the churches have understood the modern movements. Too many churches, some even in American Protestant denominations, are still both bringing religion into disrepute and hindering modern progress. When religion and

culture shall have actually joined hands, as they have done potentially in the revelations through modern scholarship, there will ensue immediately a new civilization such as the world has never seen. Should the churches fail, however—which may God forbid—we may fear a return to a state of things such as obtained in the latter days of Rome when civilization, undermined by moral rottenness, fell of its own weight. The churches seem essential to the progress of vital religion, and religion is still essential to the righteousness, justice, and peace which are necessary to progress and happiness. Within the memory of men now living some of the larger Protestant denominations as a whole have accepted changes in their religious ideas and attitudes which give hope that they will accept the New Revelation of Jesus and aid rather than hinder the New Renaissance.

15. The Emancipation of Religion From Biblicism

We have already called brief attention to the doctrine of the Bible held by Protestants of the Scholastic period. This doctrine of the absolute inerrancy of the Bible made the recovery of the gospel of Jesus impossible. Though few of even the strongest advocates of this con-

ception consciously lowered Jesus to the level of the Old Testament teachers, they did unconsciously interpret the Gospels in the light of the Old Testament and read primitive Hebrew ideas into Christianity. This doctrine of infallibility has been detrimental to the Bible itself. If the Bible must be taken all or none, the latter alternative would have to be the choice of an intelligent man; and, unfortunately, many such a decision has been made by those who know of no other alternative. In time the doctrine of the infallibility of the Bible would almost have been the death of Christianity itself. To those who still hold it, it is a constant embarrassment, as is the doctrine of the infallibility of the Pope to many enlightened American Roman Catholics. But the greatest evil entailed in this idea is that it prevents an understanding of the gospel of Jesus. Likewise Paul also has been often read into the gospel of Jesus by those who suppose that in every respect Paul is true to Jesus, and so taking all that is found in Paul to be genuine aspects of the gospel of Jesus. The result has been that Paul has been made the teacher of the church to a greater extent than Jesus, while Jesus has been fitted into a theoretical plan of salvation. Ever since the composition of the Apostles' Creed and before, the main

work of Christ has been supposed to be his suffering, death, resurrection, and his coming judgment, while the church has looked to Paul all too largely for guidance in practical living.

The discovery of development in the Bible has made it possible to exalt Jesus to his proper place. There is a growing disposition now to look to Jesus for guidance rather than to Paul. The work of Darwin has done much to make the new revelation of Jesus possible, for it enabled a long list of biblical scholars, excavators, and students of comparative religion to apply similar principles of evolution to reveal the progressive revelation of God in the Bible, and so at last to evaluate Jesus as the Supreme Manifestation of God and the interpreter of his will.

The discoverer of the scientific method in modern times, Nicholas de Lyra, who in the fifteenth century compared varying manuscripts, was the first modern critic of the Bible. Luther was a close second, doubting if Moses wrote the "Books of Moses" entire, accounting Kings more accurate than Chronicles, and calling James a "right strawy epistle." The period of Protestant Scholasticism followed immediately, during which there were a few scholars who were carrying on a literary and historical study of the Bible. Spinoza ex-

pressed doubt of the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch. Hobbes doubted the Mosaic authorship of the chapter (34 of Genesis) which tells of Moses' death. Astruc was the first to discover that there are two accounts of creation, one in the first, and the other in the second chapter of Genesis. A great classical scholar[3] declared: "The Bible must be rightly examined according to its own language and must not be bribed by the authority of the church, or by feeling, or by any allegorizing tendency, or by any system of philosophy." He considered that parts of the Old Testament were no longer of value. Michaelis, of Goettingen, emphasized the necessity of knowing biblical languages, contemporary history, the physical and moral characteristics of the people, and the ways of the neighboring peoples from whom the Hebrews might have adopted customs and ideas. He published a *Hebrew Grammar* in 1778, and an *Introduction to the New Testament* in 1788. Semler, of Halle, rejected a number of Old Testament books and distinguished between religion and theology. All these seventeenth- and eighteenth-century scholars laid down the main lines to be pursued in biblical criticism, but their own contributions were pretty largely negative.

[3] Professor Ernesti, of Leipzig.

In the nineteenth century there was a worthy succession of biblical scholars, and martyrs, too, to biblical science. In 1819 De Wette was expelled from his professorship in Berlin. Gesenius' *Hebrew Lexicon* and *Grammar* were published in 1812–13. Winer's *New Testament Grammar* appeared in 1821. Strauss' *Life of Jesu* (1835), in which he took the position that the gospel story is mythological and that we cannot know the real Jesus, and Bauer's *Christian Gnosis* (1835) and his book on Paul (1845) compelled the church in order to meet these and other errors to study the New Testament in a thoroughly scientific manner. The remarkable work of a missionary in Capetown, South Africa, Colenso, on the Pentateuch was rewarded by his excommunication. There was most freedom for study in Germany, then Holland, England, France, and America respectively. In America all denominations which produced any prophets at all shared in the opprobrium of having persecuted them. The Presbyterians, Methodists, and Congregationalists removed professors from biblical chairs. But the work of the excavators was corroborating the findings of the biblical scholars, beginning with the discovery of Assyrian Flood tablets similar to the accounts in the Bible but unquestionably antedating them.

Darwin's *Origin of Species* (1859) furnished the developmental explanation of the findings of the literary and historical critics, the excavators, and students of comparative religion, and enabled them to arrange their data in such orderly form as to convince open minds of a gradual development in morals and religion in the Old Testament. In the whole history of religion, both biblical and nonbiblical, was noted the same sort of gradual and orderly development which natural scientists were finding in geology and biology. All this was looked upon by many as a "skeptical crusade against the Bible," and an attempt to deny divine revelation. Much concern was felt in the last decade of the nineteenth century, when W. R. Harper, of Chicago University, and a host of other scholars began to popularize the results of Old Testament criticism through the enthusiasm of young ministers whom he had had in his classes. It must be said that the results of New Testament criticism have not yet been popularized to any great extent. Some who will not wince at the "mistakes of Moses" writhe under the notion of mistakes by Paul. It may be noted that the differences among the scholars concerning New Testament problems are wider than over those of the Old Testament. The

problems are more difficult in themselves and prejudices, being stronger, are a greater hindrance. The synoptic problem seems to some to be impossible of solution unless further data are unearthed.

The net result of this work of the scholars is that Christianity has been relieved of a good deal of the impediments of primitive and entirely unworthy Semitic traditions and a deal of later Judaism. The Bible is found to be a record of the religious experiences of a most remarkable people. It is a most wonderful and valuable source book for the study of religion. But it is no longer possible nor necessary to believe in the historical, scientific, and even the moral accuracy of all parts of the Bible. It is generally recognized now that the Old Testament should be judged in the light of the spirit and teachings of Jesus. When it becomes generally recognized that the New Testament also should be judged in the same manner, the way will open for the estimation and correction of the church and "Christianity" by the standards of Jesus.

However painful it may be to do so, there should not be the least hesitation, when faced with the alternative, to sacrifice a cherished theory of inspiration for the exaltation of Jesus to his proper place in our religion and

in the life of the world. To every person, but especially to the youth of our time, it should be made clear that everything in human life and experience, not excluding the Bible and all our religious ideas and practices, should be estimated by and corrected as rapidly as possible by the standard of the spirit of Jesus. We become imitators of Jesus himself in so doing, and it has become extremely urgent in our crucial time that we fail not to make Jesus the measure of all things.

16. From Warfare to Co-operation Between Science and Theology

For a period of considerably more than a thousand years—from shortly after the beginning of the Christian era to the Renaissance—there was scarcely any progress made in the sciences. "After Galen (c. 130 A. D.) we find no great name in anatomy until we come to Vessalius some fourteen hundred years later."[4] "For a thousand years there had been no progress in anatomy and medicine." Likewise the advance in astronomy was practically *nil* from Ptolemy (c. 125 B. C.) to Copernicus (c. 1525 A. D.). If one compares the cosmogony of the ancient Hebrews with that of the late

[4] Sedgwick and Tyler, *A Short History of Science*, p. 147. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

mediæval times, one will be struck with the similarity. (Cf. Hastings' *Bible Dictionary*, Van Loon.)

The Reformation came just a little too soon. The great Protestant creeds and systems of theology were written with this ancient Hebrew cosmogony in mind. Protestant Scholasticism preserved these deposits of the faith unsullied during a period when remarkable developments were taking place in all the sciences. It is no matter of surprise that, at the close of that most remarkable century, the eighteenth, during which more knowledge was added to the sum total in comparison with that with which it began than in any century in human history, there should have been almost an entire divergence between religion and contemporary thought resulting in the prevalence of infidelity.

While Methodism and revivalism generally emphasized personal experience of religion and insofar were in harmony with the methods of empirical science, and while the work of Kant, Schleiermacher, and the psychologists of religion began to give religion a place and validity of its own and made religion possible for intelligent people who recognized the contradictions of science and theology, it was not till the very latter part of the nineteenth century and the opening years of the twentieth

that, for people moderately conversant with matters theological and scientific, the conflict between science and religion had passed, and co-operation of the two toward an understanding of reality began, making the acceptance of Jesus' religion intellectually possible. For the first time since the severance of the mutual relations of vital religion and culture in the Renaissance period and the beginning of the conflict between them, religion and modern culture are at one, at least potentially, and are rendering significant aid one to the other. This has been accomplished so far only for the few. If the churches and the many can be brought to the same blessed attainment, or even to acquiesce peaceably in it, a most remarkable advance in religion and, indeed, in our whole civilization will take place; but the "if," though a very small word, looms ominously large.

This exceedingly fortunate *rapprochement* has been made possible by three significant developments. We have considered two of them: "The Religious Declaration of Independence" and "The Emancipation of Religion from Biblicism." The third factor making for the harmony and the co-operation of science and religion is a change quite revolutionary in the attitude of science itself, which now humbly

acknowledges that it knows practically nothing of reality.

Professor A. S. Eddington, of Cambridge, who has done most to develop and popularize the theory of relativity, says:

> In considering the relation of religion and science it is a very relevant fact that physics is now in a course of abandoning all claim to a type of knowledge which it formerly asserted without hesitation. . . . Until recently physics took it for granted that it had knowledge of the entities dealt with.[5]

Let it be understood that religion is not completely rationalized. It is still not possible to reason oneself into religion, but it is great gain to be able to be religious without denying the validity of modern knowledge. Religion is still—and one may well hope that it ever will be—a matter of faith primarily. Religion to be worthy of the name must be a venture, a hazarding of one's life on the reality of God, freedom, and immortality. Intimacy with God ever will be an attainment. To be able to know God without first, last, and all the time coming into a practical, spiritual relationship of love and fellowship with him would render that knowledge of God largely useless in the development of godlike character which is the end of all religion. This disaster is not likely

[5] *Nature of Physical World.* Reprinted by permission of the publishers, The Macmillan Company.

to overtake the human race in the near future. There is still enough of uncertainty and vagueness about spiritual things to lend zest to our search for God and to call out venturesome heroism.

The conclusions which many drew from the findings of the scientists in the second quarter of the nineteenth century may be illustrated by reference to the Positivist philosophy of Comte. For him the only legitimate objects of study were physical facts and the laws of their operation. He would exclude consciousness, for to him the only means of knowing was by perception. All we can know about man is learned from physiology and social phenomena, including history, art, commerce, government. Only external facts are objects of study, and science can, and will in time, explain everything in the universe. Man in the course of his development has passed through the theological stage, the metaphysical, and has now come to the scientific. The only philosophy worthy of attention is positivism, or the study of positive, scientific facts and realities. True religion enthrones humanity as God. In this temple of humanity Comte could have priests of humanity administering the seven sacraments of the Great Epochs in a man's life. The symbol in this temple is a woman with

her young son in her arms. Yes, Comte harmonized science and religion, but such a religion!

It is interesting to note that Herbert Spencer would also have a religion. It consists in passive contemplation of that mysterious reality back of phenomena which he calls "the Unknowable!" He knows several things about his "Unknowable." It exists, for there must be some ultimate cause of phenomena; it is a unity; it is absolute; but it is not personal and has no moral aspects. This "Unknowable" is a postulate deduced from matter, motion, and force, which are knowable. By means of his test of truth which he calls "the universal postulate," that is, the inability to conceive the opposite, he reasons that the only ultimate reality is "the Unknowable," which is the ground of all phenomena.

Beginning with matter, motion, and force, Spencer builds up the universe, including the solar system and the mind of man, out of their various and varying combinations. He describes the very general outlines of what has probably taken place, and, like many scientists, he takes description for explanation, and will allow nothing that does not come within his predetermined categories. His description taken for explanation is, "Evolution is an integration of matter and concomitant dissi-

pation of motion; during which matter passes from a relatively indefinite incoherent homogeneity to a relatively definite coherent heterogeneity; and during which the retained motion undergoes a parallel transformation"—an exceedingly enticing sort of formula for the making of a universe. It was long before it was recognized as being exceedingly shallow as an explanation of the universe, being merely descriptive of processes; and, of course, his passive contemplation of the postulated "unknowable" was a useless religion.

Coming to the third quarter of the nineteenth century, we find science still unfriendly, not only to theology, but to vital religion. Although a few theologians on both sides of the Atlantic had begun to harmonize theology and evolution, science was for the most part materialistic. George Harris says:

> In the seventies, when Tyndall and Huxley were ruling the intellectual world, a scornful materialism treated the claims of anything that did not come within the domain of physical science as obscurantist. This was the time when people talked of the brain secreting thought as the liver secretes bile.[6]

Likewise Sir Oliver Lodge:

> Fifty years ago philosophical materialism was

[6] *A Century's Change in Religion.* Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company.

rampant. . . . A separate entity such as life or mind seemed a superfluous superstition; the idea of an animating principle or "soul" was more appropriate to primitive man or savages than to men of science, while as to a spiritual world it seemed to many a gross illusion. Man could not survive his brain. Death was the end of him. . . . Matter, especially the complex called protoplasm, was able to explain everything. . . . In matter (as Tyndall said in his famous Belfast address to the British Association in 1874) was discerned "the promise and potency of all forms of life." At the same meeting, Huxley brilliantly upheld the Cartesian view that "animals (including man) were automats —were worked like mechanism, by physical and chemical stimuli . . . and that free will was an illusion."

Then Sir Oliver goes on to say:

That really represents the atmosphere of my own youth. . . . But looking at the world to-day and the attitude of the leaders of science, we can trace a great, an almost revolutionary change. Design is beginning to be admitted by many biologists—they are unable to resist the evidence in favor of purpose and plan. . . . In many ways the teachings of science are being accepted by theologians. The old bitterness has departed. . . . Mind cannot now be excluded from the universe. It is mind which dominates, and the whole course of evolution is full of the signs of guidance and intention. The truths of science and the truths of religion are no longer in conflict."[7]

The changed attitude of science is admirably

[7] British Weekly, Fortieth Anniversary Number, November 11, 1926.

summed up in a single sentence from the man who divided the atom, Professor Millikan: "To-day physics is much more open-minded, less dogmatic, less disposed to make all-inclusive generalizations, to imagine it is dealing with ultimate realities, than it was twenty-five years ago."[8]

While science was undergoing this change Christian scholars were applying scientific methods to the study of the Bible and to church history, and theologians were reinterpreting religion in terms of present-day thought, emancipating religion both from Biblicism and from subservience to an outworn world-view. The net result of all this is that, whereas a hundred years ago a man had the choice of being intelligent and an infidel or having an obscurantist religion, to-day the evangelically religious man may freely accept the results of modern scholarship. George Harris says further, "Gradually a more spiritual conception of the universe dawned on the minds of thinkers, and a greater readiness to allow that physical laws do not account for the sum-total of existence."[9]

The following excerpts show how one great

[8] Reprinted by permission of author.
[9] *A Century's Change in Religion.* Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company.

present-day scientist reasons from nature to God:

Observation, experiment, and calculation led science to the revelation of new physical realities. This method of inquiry constructed the firm foundation of the realities, a foundation laid deeply in the solid ground of human experience. In a similar way, human experience, derived from contemplation and analysis of the creative power of the human soul, led human reason to the belief in God, the fountain head of all spiritual realities. The values of these realities fortify this belief. Their values in every action of human life are felt daily even more deeply than the values of physical realities. All human experience testifies that they are not mere shadows which mislead the untrained imagination.

This resemblance finds the simplest and most striking illustration in the efforts of the spiritual forces to transform the life of humanity into a cosmos, a living structure of simple law and beautiful order. It is here that the mode of operation of the co-ordinating spiritual forces reminds us most vividly of the mode of operation of the co-ordinating physical forces, and it exhibits most obvious resemblance between physical and spiritual realities.

Love, according to Christ, is the most powerful of all these co-ordinating forces. Its co-ordinating action in the spiritual world is very similar to the co-ordinating action of the gravitational force in the physical world. Christ discovered it and revealed it to us in his two Commandments, etc.

Creative co-ordination leads, therefore, to a

higher level of creation by the action of spiritual forces, just as it does in the physical world by the action of physical forces. It is the concept of this universal co-ordinating process which unites the two worlds to each other so that our understanding of one will aid in the understanding of the other.

Here is one of the fundamental reasons why science and religion supplement each other. They are the two pillars of the portal through which the human soul enters the world where the Divinity resides. This is the mental attitude which dictated these narratives. If the signs of the times do not deceive, then there is a universal drift toward this mental attitude. This drift I call the New Reformation.[10]

Whitehead finds God in what he calls "the Principle of Concretion"—"the makeup of the universe which draws all beings into the constitution of each man, each dewdrop, and each historic civilization," even as Tennyson saw the universe and God in the "flower in the crannied wall." God is the inherent nature of all things to participate in each and each in all, the constitutive principle which gives concreteness to all being, which rallies the whole universe to the making and sustaining of every concrete thing. But God is not the world, nor the world God; rather is he the one all-sustaining, all-pervading principle of concre-

[10] M. I. Pupin, *The New Reformation*, pp. 257ff. Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

tion, the constitutive, the æsthetic order of all being. Kant argued from the moral order to God, but Whitehead declares that all order is derived from the immanence of God, who, as the ordering entity, is a necessary element in the metaphysical situation presented by the actual world.

The peak of the mechanistic view of the universe has passed; the present tendency, with the possible exception of psychology, is away from mechanism and toward vitalism of some sort. The theory that all life can be accounted for by the play of physical and chemical forces on "intraprotoplasmic mechanisms which have been evolved through the influence of natural selection acting for ages," that all organisms can be accounted for by cells growing and dividing according to physical and chemical stimuli, is becoming more and more an impossible view. Chemical actions and reactions can be accounted for and measured, but not the biological. It is impossible to determine the degree of physiological excitability. Secretions and absorption cannot be determined mechanically. Metabolism is regulated in the body within the living cells, but how is not known. And even for the movement of the muscles no purely physico-chemical explanation is satisfactory. And if anything is

certain, it is that all cells are formed by pre-existing cells. "The main outstanding fact is that the mechanistic account of the universe breaks down completely in connection with the phenomena of life."[11] The application of the theory by highly trained investigators has "shown with ever-increasing clearness that the physico-chemical explanations of elemental physical processes are as remote as any time in the past, and that they seem to physiologists of the present time far more remote than they appeared at the middle of the last century."[12]

Bergson arrives at Haldane's assertion that mechanism breaks down in the presence of life from another angle. He sees in the universe an expression of a "life-force" which is necessary to set in motion the mechanism of nature. Furthermore, he sees the universe as an expression of a system, and a system requires organization, and life is the only organizing principle we know. To account for the highest expression, that is, man, there is required in the universe life like man's but suprapersonal.

Bertrand Russell says that "mind and matter are for certain purposes convenient terms, but are not legitimate realities. Electrons and

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[11] J. S. Haldane, *Mechanism, Life, and Personality*, p. 64. Reprinted by permission of author.

[12] *Ibid.*, p. 47.

protons, like the soul, are logical fictions."[13] To this Canon Streeter replies, "If matter is not solid at all, . . . it no longer strikes the imagination as being so much more real than invisibilities like life or thought"; and, further, that the "soul is a different fiction from the electron and the proton, for the 'soul' stands for an element in reality which can frame theories about protons and electrons."[14]

Mechanism is becoming more and more untenable. "Mechanomorphism" is, after all, but another form of "anthropomorphism" in an age of remarkable mechanical inventions. A machine does not make itself or drive itself. If the "push and pull" of "force" is discarded in favor of "potential and kinetic energy," and if causation is displaced by "expectation" that certain changes will take place if other changes are made, still "expectation" is anthropomorphic; and if there is no "push and pull," the universe is no machine. If causation is valid, mechanistic materialism is impossible; and if it is not valid, the universe is no machine. Some scientists have come to see that they are merely describing processes and assigning phenomena to classes of other similar phenomena

[13] Reprinted by permission of author.
[14] *Reality*, pp. 16, 17, 18. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

and calling that "explanation"; they recognize the fact that they are not dealing with realities, and some have discovered that there are some things which do not come under the categories of the scientists. Life is in a class by itself and so cannot be "explained" by assigning it with other similar phenomena. Life, being a principle of individuation, becomes less amenable to classification the higher its forms. In personality "there is always something that cannot in this sense be explained." The most reasonable explanation of the world, including man with his power of reason, his moral ideals, and his religion, is some sort of ethical theism. But this is to give the problem up, for it is to refer to God the problem on which the human mind has worked from time immemorial. This reference to God the human mind is loath to make, for it wishes to find in the world itself a natural explanation without reference to anything supernatural. This is a commendable tradition to which very largely is due the progress that has been made toward an understanding of the world. But this naturalistic explanation of all things is as far from realization now as at any time in history and probably even more remote. Haldane says:

> The application to physiology of new physical chemical methods and discoveries has resulted in

a vast increase of physiological knowledge, but has also shown with ever increasing clearness that physico-chemical explanations of elementary physical processes are as remote as at any time in the past and that they seem to physiologists of the present time far more remote than they appeared at the middle of the last century.[15]

What Haldane says about physiology is probably true with reference to other sciences. The only successful explanations are given in theism.

As this manuscript is being completed, there comes to hand a book such as we had long hoped for, but which we had thought was hardly possible as yet in the chaotic state of the nature of reality in the minds of physical scientists. It is the Gifford Lectures of 1927, delivered by A. S. Eddington, and published in November, 1928.[16] The conclusions of this man, who, with Einstein, Bohr, Millikan, Rutherford, and a few others, has done most for the advancement of scientific theory in the present generation, cannot fail to have great weight with every thinking man. When Eddington discusses the implications of modern science for philosophy and religion, surely the scientist, the philosopher, and everyone in-

[15] *Mechanism, Life and Personality,* p. 47. Reprinted by permission of the author.

[16] *The Nature of the Physical World,* The Macmillan Company.

terested in the theory of religion will take heed.

Many persons have been faintly hoping that the physicist would solve for us the age-long problem of the relation of mind and matter; and yet we have been so largely dominated by the ancient conception of the dualism that we scarcely dared hope for a solution. Now, Eddington has not accomplished this feat, which we still are inclined to believe impossible, at least for an indefinite future time. However, the pronouncements of this scientist are significant, not so much in their truth, as in that they show the direction which the scientific mind is taking. Professor Eddington has succeeded in showing that "these scientific developments provide new material for the philosopher." With the kind permission of the author we wish to quote freely several passages (p. 276 *et seq.*) which are characteristic and which, we trust, will be more clearly stated than could be done by a layman in the field of science.

To put the conclusion crudely, the stuff of the world is mind-stuff. The mind-stuff of the world is, of course, something more general than our individual conscious minds; but we think of its nature as not altogether foreign to the feelings of our consciousness. Only here and there does it rise to the level of consciousness, but from such islands

proceeds all knowledge. (In ways which we recognize as largely Cartesian, Eddington arrives at the external world.) I grant your consciousness equal status with my own. Accordingly, my subject of study becomes differentiated into the contents of many consciousnesses, each content constituting a viewpoint. There then arises the problem of combining the viewpoints, and it is through this that the external world of physics arises. There is a stable element which is common to other consciousnesses. This common element cannot be placed in one man's consciousness rather than in another's; it must be in neutral ground—an external world.

Any raising of the question of reality in its transcendental sense leads us to a perspective from which we see man not as a bundle of sensory impressions, but conscious of purpose and responsibilities to which the external world is subordinate. From this perspective we recognize a spiritual world alongside the physical world. Those who in the search for truth start from consciousness as a seat of self-knowledge with interests and responsibilities not confined to the material plane are just as much facing the hard facts of experience as those who start from consciousness as a device for reading the indications of spectroscopes and micrometers. Feelings, purpose, values make up our consciousness as much as sense impressions. We follow up the sense impressions and find that they lead into the external world discussed by science; we follow up the other elements of our being and find that they lead—not into a world of space and time, but surely somewhere, . . . no longer. . . . blind alleys, but into a spiritual world.

The physicist now regards his own external world in a way which I can only describe as more mystical,

though not less exact and practical, than that which prevailed some years ago, when it was taken for granted that nothing could be true unless an engineer could make a model of it. That overweening phase, when it was almost necessary to ask permission of the physicist to call one's soul one's own, is past.

It will perhaps be said that the conclusion to be drawn from these arguments from modern science is that religion first became possible for a reasonable scientific man about the year 1927. If we must consider that tiresome person, the consistently reasonable man, certain common activities (for example, falling in love) are, I fancy, still forbidden him. If our expectation should prove well founded that 1927 has seen the final overthrow of strict causality by Heisenberg, Bohr, Born, and others, the year will certainly rank as one of the greatest epochs in the development of scientific philosophy.[17]

(Sentences, paragraphs, and pages have been broken up regardless, but we trust the meaning of the author has been made clear without any overstraining or in any way perverting the sense of passages quoted. No comment is needed except that the reader is most earnestly urged not only to read, but to ponder well the contents of this volume by Eddington.)

17. Psychology and Religion—The Present Storm Center

The effect of the many new discoveries in

[17] A. S. Eddington, *Nature of the Physical World*. Reprinted by permission of the publishers, The Macmillan Company.

psychology has been to lead many to a position similar to that to which the discoveries in natural science led in the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth. The discovery of the "reign of law" in the mind has affected psychologists just as did the discovery of universal and inexorable law in the natural order. Laplace, when asked why he did not mention the name of God in his book on astronomy, replied that the new discoveries made the idea of God useless. Of course there was no need to mention God in his account of the nebular hypothesis, in merely describing the processes of world making; but Laplace evidently thought the idea of the existence of a God at all was rendered superfluous by natural science. It was not till the appearance of Darwin's *Descent of Man*, however, that man, in the judgment of many persons, could be accounted for without God. While many still hold to this characteristic eighteenth-century conception of the results of natural science, the changes within the last half century have been revolutionary. The present situation in psychology is so remarkably similar to that of natural science in the eighteenth century that without hesitation one may predict like issues, except that the revolution in the attitude of psychologists to religion will

probably take place far more rapidly because the battles are similar and the victory in the one will greatly aid in the other. The fact is that at the present time there is a turning of the naturalistic tide in psychology. Already many are taking the same data, and giving interpretations thereof which not only make religion possible, but which to many show that the psychic rather than the naturalistic interpretation is the most plausible explanation of the facts. As it is possible now after so long a time of doubt for one to adopt the findings of the scientists in physics, biology, and other natural sciences and not only be religious, but be all the more intelligently religious; so already psychology has become a great aid both to the understanding of religion and to an appreciation of its place of permanent value in human life.

It is safe to say that as much progress has been made in psychology in half a century as was made in natural science in four centuries. This remarkably rapid progress was due to the fact that the scientific attitude of mind of freedom from prejudice, courage, truthfulness, and the scientific method of observation, experiment, analysis, and classification had been thoroughly perfected by the time that psychology became a science rather than a phi-

losophy. It was just this rapidity of progress which has caused so many engaged in the study to lose their perspective. Data have been gathered far more rapidly than they could be assimilated. It is no matter of surprise—rather, it should have been expected—that, since all discoveries led to the recognition of law in mental processes, mechanism would be the first explanation, and that selfhood would be placed in the natural order rather than in the psychic. The first study of phenomena in the religious realm has led many to discredit religion completely. The study of the gregarious instinct and the psychology of the crowd account for many aspects of public worship. Character has apparently been changed by cerebral operations. A comparison of animal psychology with that of man emphasizes the kinship of man to the animal. The psychology of the abnormal has led many to regard religion as pathological, as being neurotic. Freud, Jung, Schroeder, and others regard religion as misinterpreted sex feeling, and completely discredit it. The study of the subconscious has revealed repressions which though unconscious have led to very serious disorders. While Freud advocated the sublimation of these repressions, other lesser lights have been known to advise immoral conduct.

In fact, a hasty interpretation and a shallow view of psychological phenomena have led many to the position of the popular infidelity of the eighteenth century and the early part of the nineteenth before a more thorough study of natural science revealed the fact that natural scientists were not dealing with ultimate realities at all, but were only describing processes. It is a very notable fact that in this newest science of psychology not a few students have come to the same point of view. That religion will be as greatly clarified, enriched, and re-enforced by the study of psychology as it has been from the revelations of natural science there can be scarcely a shadow of doubt. Many notable contributions have already been made.

Psychology is now a science, and as such it has the limitations of science. It has no more power to penetrate to ultimate realities than has natural science. It has no more right to set up categories and rule out of the universe those entities which are not amenable to its methods than has natural science. Science can deal only with physical phenomena, it cannot get beyond into ultimate reality. "Whatever the origin of the mental states of religion, we assume that once they are in man's mind they will obey ordinary mental laws; in other

words, that they will prove amenable to treatment by the methods of ordinary psychology."[18] "The psychologist is no more necessarily concerned with the question of whether religious experience is caused by anything outside the subject than is the physicist with the question of the reality of matter."[19] This question is but an instance of the question of the relation of mind and brain. "The influence of disease of the brain on the mental life is alleged. In such a case is it the mind itself which is deranged, or might it not rather be the mechanism for the insertion of mind into things?"[20]

While the study of mental processes cannot confirm or deny reality in a superphysical world back of them, "the study of comparative religion and psychology of religion has made it more than ever evident that religion is something natural to man, and is not imposed on him by any extraneous authority, art, or device. It belongs to the very constitution of his nature that his reaction to the universe should find expression in forms which we can only call religious. Man is made in that way and can

[18] R. H. Thouless, *Psychology of Religion*, p. 7. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

[19] Thouless, *op. cit.*, p. 6. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

[20] Bergson, quoted in W. Monod, *The Road to God*, p. 250.

do no other if he is to fulfill his proper bent."[21] Furthermore, while religion is not instinctive it is so closely connected with human instincts that it argues for the permanence of religion. Dependence upon God for the supply of our immediate needs and for provision for our future destiny in immortality is based upon the instinct of self-preservation. The sex instinct is doubtless underneath the demand for a worthy and permanent object of love; and the gregarious instinct will lead people with similar religious experiences to associate themselves in some sort of church.

After all, whether religion is possible at all is bound up with the question of the nature of selfhood. We no longer reason from God to man, but from man to God. If there is nothing superphysical in man, we may as well give up the question of the existence of God. This is the very center of the "storm center." If the contentions of such scholars as Watson, Sellers, and Alexander are true—that man is wholly a part of the natural order, that self is to be identified with the physical organism, that thought is in the last analysis an activity of the body, and that self is inseparable from the body—then, of course, religion is superstitious

[21] W. B. Selbie, *Psychology of Religion*, p. 2. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

and irrational. No science should resort to the supernatural, or in any way go beyond the boundaries of the purely physical and natural order to account for any phenomena till forced to do so. However, in the case of psychical as well as natural phenomena many persons find the most natural, and even the inevitable, explanation in the assumption of a spiritual order. This simplest explanation would seem obligatory if to do otherwise not only does not contribute anything to science, but if failure to do this is positively hindering the progress of the science. Haldane thinks that naturalistic mechanism is positively hindering the science of physiology, and many there are who hold the same thesis with regard to psychology.

There are a good many facts regarding selfhood for which naturalism fails adequately to account, and wisdom would seem to indicate that some other way should be tried which does not end in a blind. While it is the province of psychology of religion to gather, sort, and classify the phenomena of religious experience, there is no reason why we should not ask what theory of reality will best account for the data. Psychologists, like the other scientists, are constantly invading the realm of philosophy; nor should they be blamed if they are inclined to ask what their findings indicate with

reference to problems which are distinctly those of philosophy, and out of their province, and yet problems in which as human beings they are inevitably interested. Their philosophical conclusions should not be taken too seriously, for they are laymen in the field and have the layman's characteristic shortcomings and limitations.

Granted the axiomatic truth that everything in consciousness from whatever source which manifests itself in ways that are observable will behave in accordance with the laws of the mind, still there are many facts which it would seem are not accounted for by materialistic mechanism, but which seem to point to something superphysical called by whatever name, mind, soul, spirit—some sort of a superphysical self. Without pausing to discuss them we might mention such facts as that man is conscious of freedom, of not being altogether the sport of natural law. He can control and direct natural law. He has sight but also insight. The mind does not simply record, but it discovers. It does not simply transmit, it transmutes experiences. It is not an echo, but it creates; it is cause as well as effect. Pascal said that man was greater than the material universe, for though it may crush him he alone would know that he was being crushed. It

is a matter for which naturalism cannot adequately account that all physical forces act only in the present. The mind can be personally aware of the past and can forecast; can bring the past and the future to bear on the present through the powers of memory, imagination, and thought. It certainly would be a case of inexcusably extreme anthropomorphism to say that nature prepares for the future. Only man is what he is striving to be. Again, self is persistent and unitary, indicating its superphysical nature.

However much there be of grafting of skin and bone, as long as life is not quenched, the self remains. We are on less solid ground when we say that the Society for Psychic Research have gathered data which would seem to be explained either on the basis of spiritualism or else by a supersensible communication of mind with mind. If we enter the matters of ethical and religious experiences, the only adequate explanation would seem to be that there is a real corresponding environment, else ethics and religion would not persist. The same is true of all realms of appreciations and values, such as love, faith, æsthetics. The psychical rather than the naturalistic interpretation of these phases of consciousness would not hinder, but would more likely further psychological

science. If the dictum of science, that the simplest is most likely the best explanation, be sound, the psychic explanation is indicated. Pupin presents a very striking analogy:

When the primordial activities in the physical universe . . . revealed themselves as the activities of a practically infinite number of tiny granules, electrons and protons, atoms and molecules, organic cells and their constituent molecules of life, then the picture of an all-embracing cosmic chaos of activities presented itself; the activities of enormous swarms of autonomous granules are necessarily chaotic. Alongside of this puzzling picture the narratives presented also the familiar pictures of orderly creations rising everywhere out of the chaotic disturbance of a storm-tossed ocean. These orderly creations remind us that there is in every nook and corner of the physical universe a transformation of the primordial chaos into an orderly and intelligible cosmos. This transformation is the most characteristic feature of the world of organic life. Its operation is called in these narratives Creative Co-ordination; it is an interpreter and a guide to the narratives on their journey from the inorganic to the organic world, and finally to the world of human consciousness.

But the resulting cosmos in the world of consciousness is not that of orderly physical structures performing orderly physical functions like those in the external inorganic and organic world; it is the cosmos of a state of consciousness. We cannot describe it in terms of any known physical realities; neither can we express it in terms of actions and reactions of any known physical entity. We infer that the cosmos of consciousness is a manifestation of a new entity which we call the soul, just as from

the manifestations of electrical and magnetic forces Farraday inferred the existence of new entities which these narratives called the electrical and magnetic flux. The cosmos of consciousness is a psychic reality; it is subjective, of course, but it is as real to us as, for instance, the objective physical reality of electrical radiation. Just as electrical radiation reveals the existence of an ultramaterial entity, the electrical flux, so the psychic realities of our consciousness reveal the existence of an ultramaterial entity of the soul. The ultimate natures of these two entities are hidden behind a cosmic veil which so far has remained impenetrable; their manifestations, however, are perfectly clear; they are like living embroidery of supreme subtle texture adorning the visible face of the cosmic veil.[22]

The argument of some psychologists, that God is the neurotic projection upon the universe of a phantasy love-object in default of an earthly one, may be countered by noting the fact that all such known cases are pathological, and it is very faulty reasoning to apply the principles of abnormal psychology to normal subjects even if traces of abnormality may be found in the most normal man. Furthermore, many psychotherapeutists and psychoanalysts (especially of the Zurich school) purposely direct their patients to religion, even when they themselves have none, for its therapeutic values. The very success of this method

[22] M. I. Pupin, *The New Reformation*, p. 257. Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

would seem to indicate that this love-object is no fantastic creation of an abnormal mind, but that it works so well because it is true and real. Rufus M. Jones argues thus for the reality of the spiritual:

> Do they spring from a blind driving urge in men with no corresponding reality in the world beyond man, or do they arise in us because the universe in its deeper aspects is itself a universe which furnishes a ground for spiritual values and is essentially adapted to call them forth in us and minister to them?[23]

In similar fashion Principal Selbie:

> The ultimate test is the practical one of the workableness of the result arrived at. Our interpretation of the universe must work or we abandon it. So in religion the test of the hypothesis is its power to make for the advancement of the individual and of society. A religion that issues in fantasies of merely an emotional kind may well be under suspicion, but when it tends to the furtherance of life and to the clarifying of thought, it carries its credentials with it.[24]

W. K. Wright goes so far as to put the matter in a syllogism:

> Man is placed in a real environment, not an imaginary one. If there were no real being in man's environment to which the conception of God in some measure corresponded, man would not best

[23] New Studies in Mystical Religion, *Hibbert Journal*, April 1928, pp. 574ff.

[24] *Psychology of Religion*, pp. 301–302. Reprinted by permission of Oxford University Press.

succeed in adjusting himself to his environment by belief in God; such a belief would in that case be entirely quixotic in its effects on human conduct. But the opposite is the fact. Therefore there is a God. . . . Our conceptions of him are symbolical. The fact that the conception does work in human experience, that it does enable men to conform to the requirements of the world in which they are placed and to achieve a fuller life, is evidence for the contention that the conception is not an illusion, . . . but is symbolical of ultimate reality.[25]

In conclusion we may remind ourselves that psychology, although it has been maturing very rapidly owing to the general progress of the other sciences by which it has profited, is still largely materialistic. It is a very new science and not too much weight should be given its tentative conclusions. Discoveries of momentous significance may well be expected from this science in the near future. However, as we have seen, this discipline has done much to clarify religion and also to confirm its permanent reality and value. Already some of the recorded experiences of Jesus which hitherto we have been inclined to discredit because they were unintelligible have now become rational beliefs. Such are the cases of healing, the transfiguration, etc., the accounts of which are found to be minutely fulfilling psychological

[25] *The Student's Philosophy of Religion*, p. 357. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

laws. Psychology has given us a much more intelligible and much more assured faith in Jesus. We can now believe in the healing miracles; although the so-called nature miracles we must in honesty hold in suspense in spite of the fact that the line between the spiritual and the natural or material has been all but erased by recent discoveries in physics. The historicity of Jesus is confirmed by the harmony of so many of the recorded experiences of Jesus and the disciples, too, with psychology. In time many more psychological studies will be made, such as Canon Streeter has made of Peter's experience on the housetop in Joppa. (See *Streeter, Reality,* pp 329ff.)

18. The Jesus Myth and the Historicity of Jesus

The attitude of modern scholarship has been that though Jesus was divine in a sense in which the rest of us are not, though he was supernatural above that of ordinary men, still his life here on earth must be intelligible. If he made a revelation, that also must be capable of being understood else it is no revelation. If Jesus is human as well as divine, it must be possible to understand him as human. Historical scholarship in the spirit of modern science has undertaken fearlessly to determine

if Jesus really lived, and if so, just what sort of person he was. In this chapter we are asking, How goes the battle for the historicity of Jesus? We shall consider first the non-Christian testimony to the fact of Jesus.

The correspondence between Jesus and Abgar V, king of Edessa, is generally admitted to be a forgery. The first king of Edessa to become Christian was Abgar IX, in the third century; and we find no traces of Christianity in Edessa before the closing decade of the second century. The report of Pilate to the emperor of Rome is of fourth-century origin probably, although there is no agreement as to the date. Internal evidence is damaging to the authenticity of the report. Probably the Gospels themselves are sufficient ground for the tradition found as early as in the second century that Pilate reported favorably to the emperor on the case. The letter of Mara to his son Serapion, written possibly as early as 73 A. D., and not later than 95 A. D., stands on firmer ground. Although the letter does not mention the name of Jesus, but refers to him as "the wise king of the Jews," yet the assertion that the destruction of Jerusalem and the dispersion of the Jews is the result of divine vengeance upon the Jews for his murder makes it certain that the writer means Jesus. Mara

hopes that his son will find consolation for his unjust condemnation in the fact of the immortality of Socrates through Plato, and of "the wise king of the Jews" "because of the laws which he promulgated." Although the genuineness of this letter is not seriously questioned, the writer does not give us first-hand information, but doubtless gets his knowledge of Jesus from Christian sources. It does, of course, indicate that in the first century there were people who believed the "wise king of the Jews" was put to death, and that his name would not be forgotten because of his remarkable teachings.

The passages in Josephus have both been questioned (*Antiquities*, XVIII, 3, 3, and XX, 9, 1). The former passage is too favorable to Jesus to be from the pen of the Jewish writer, for Josephus would certainly not say, "He was the Christ." The passage, however, is in all the manuscripts and must have been in versions older than Eusebius. The case for the second passage about the death of "James the brother of Jesus, the so-called Christ," is more favorable. But the fact that the manuscripts have been tampered with by Christians, as the first passage indicates, raises suspicions about the second also. It is a pretty closely integrated passage in the context,

and if it did not refer to Jesus, most scholars would not have reason to question it. The account of the death of John the Baptist has much in its favor, but it does not mention Jesus.

The testimony of the Jew Rabbi Eliezer, son of Hyrkanos, that he met a Jewish Christian, James of Kephar Sekhanja, a disciple of "Jesus of Nazareth," is questioned because, although he was a contemporary with Josephus, the tradition was written down later from Jewish traditions. It cannot be entirely ignored, however. The passage in the *annals* of Tacitus (XV, 44) is on a firmer foundation. There was a tendency in the third quarter of the last century to question the authenticity and the validity of the whole book of the *Annals*, but since 1884 (see *Encyclopædia Britannica*, article "Tacitus") the book as a whole has been regarded as genuine. There are a few scholars (W. B. Smith, *Ecce Deus*, p. 234) who try to discredit the testimony, but without much success. The references to the "nefarious superstition," "atrocious" and "scandalous," as well as the portrayal of the psychology of the crowd, who, after seeing the terrible tortures of the Christians by Nero, "relented," are all hall-marks of genuineness. Suetonius' reference to an insurrection of the Jews in

the time of Hadrian (44 A. D.) about "Chrestus" probably pertains to a squabble in the Jewish quarter between Jews who were Christians and those who were not, such as often occurred. Some scholars too are inclined to think that the correspondence between Pliny the Younger, governor of Bithynia, 110–113 A. D., is dependent upon Christian sources. It may be said with a good degree of conviction that had there been no extraordinary claims about Jesus, had there been no miracle stories, or accounts of the resurrection, there would be but slight inclination to discredit many of the above mentioned non-Christian references to Jesus. The existence of so much apocryphal material and of so many forgeries makes careful investigators sometimes perhaps unnecessarily suspicious and cautious.

It is not without great significance that not till the past century has any Christian, Jewish, or heathen writer ever undertaken to deny the historicity of some such person as Jesus. There were many early attacks upon Christianity by Jews and pagans, but not one of them attempted to deny that Jesus was an historical person, at least so far as those early attacks have been preserved. They undertake to explain the virgin birth in calumnious fashion; they try to make out the miracles as

jugglery; they undertake to explain the origin of the resurrection stories as psychological; but not one so far as we know ever undertook to deny that some such person really lived. The silence of Jewish traditions is extremely significant too, for there is a pretty closely connected stream of Jewish tradition reaching back to the time of Jesus. The opposition, fierce and bitter, of the Jews to Christianity is well known not only from biblical sources, but also from early church history. The Jews were exceedingly zealous in bringing faggots for the burning of Polycarp at the stake. Yet no Jew undertakes to say that the great Jewish prophet Jesus never existed. Although this is argument from silence, it is an unusually significant silence.

The net result of the critical study of early non-Christian references to Jesus is not compelling. It is possible to throw out all the evidence, although it hardly seems reasonable to do so. At least the evidence is not so strong as to cause one not to give serious attention to the novel attempt to discredit Jesus by the myth process. Probably the first attempt to account for the Gospel stories without an historical person back of them was undertaken by Charles François Dupuis, a member of the French Revolution (d. 1809).

According to his contention, the life-story of Jesus is a pure invention; Jesus never existed on earth as a man at all; but the Gospels are derived from Oriental solar myths of which that of Mithra had the greatest influence and was the chief source. In similar strain was the large volume published in Strassburg in 1906 by Peter Jensen, professor of Assyriology in Marburg, in which he finds the Gospels but echoes of the stories about Gilgamesh in the Babylonian Gilgamesh Epic. A similar attempt had been made a few years before by a minister of Bremen, Albert Kalthoff, who made use of mythology to account for the Gospel stories without accepting the historicity of Jesus. Two other attempts followed rapidly in the works of W. B. Smith, of Tulane University of New Orleans, and Arthur Drews of Karlsruhe, both of whom contended that no such actual person ever existed, but that out of the pre-Christian Jesus myth the Gospels were created. As for the argument from Paul they claim that Paul knew nothing of a real person called Jesus, and that his interest is in the heavenly, divine Christ.

It is scarcely necessary to say that the work of these few scholars has not been convincing. The myth idea based on nothing historical has not seemed to be sufficient to account for the

early Christian movement, or to do justice to the biblical sources. S. J. Case's book, *The Historicity of Jesus*, Chicago, 1912, stands as the last significant word on the subject.

The volume by Georg Morris Cohn Brandes makes no contribution to the discussion of the historicity of Jesus. It merely popularizes the controversy which has been carried on by New Testament scholars (*Jesus, a Myth*, Tr. by Edwin Bjoerkman, London, 1926). Certain French scholars have recently renewed the discussion but with contentions so erratic as to merit little attention. In reply some of the French orthodox are doing what T. J. Thorburn did ten years since in his *Mythical Interpretation of the Gospels* (New York, 1916). He undertook to prove so much that he lost his case except with those who already agreed with him. French Protestantism does not depend upon any intellectual matter; but it has become urgent for wholesome and influential religion in France, that French Protestants should not sidestep this issue by an appeal to mystical or practical religion, or by simply stating the traditional position.

There is another school of those who have given myth a large place in the origin of Christianity: Strauss, who published his *Leben Jesu* in 1836, and the English scholar, John M.

Robertson, whose *Christianity and Mythology* appeared in 1900. The latter considers that there was a real but obscure man who was the founder of a small community from which the Gospel stories arose, influenced by the Jesus myth and by Jewish Messianic ideas. Strauss, however, and the Tübingen School have made significant permanent contributions to biblical criticism. Strauss does not belong so much in the class of those who have emphasized mythology as with the liberal, critical school, although the findings of the Tübingen School have been discredited, particularly the dating of so many New Testament documents late so as to allow for the development to take place in accordance to Hegelian philosophy of history. But Strauss' idea that what was expected of the Jewish Messiah was told of Jesus has demanded the serious attention of scholars, although it is generally admitted that he has entirely overstated his case.

It is safe to say that the myth idea without any historical person, Jesus, is not likely to receive any further serious attention; and that the last new word has been said for the influence of the pre-Christian myth doctrine of the building up of the Gospel stories out of an ordinary man plus the Jesus myth. It remains for us to ask, "Who was this actual historical

Person, what did he teach, and how much can we rely upon the Gospel accounts?"

19. The One-Hundred-and-Fifty-Year Jesus Research

The writer is aware that this chapter may cause comment, perhaps unfavorable. Believing, however, that it contains matter of great religious significance, he asks that judgment be withheld until it has been read completely through and the content carefully pondered.

Since the posthumous publication of the works of Reimarus (d. 1768) by Lessing (1774–78) and more especially since the appearance of Strauss' *Life of Jesus* in 1835 down to the publication of S. J. Case's *Jesus—a New Biography*, in 1927, there has been a succession of New Testament scholars who have employed all available resources in a thoroughly scientific spirit to determine whether such a person actually lived, and if so, what sort of person he was and what he taught. They have utilized the results of textual criticism to secure the best possible New Testament texts and have made use of any contemporary literature that might afford some light on their problem. They have employed all available resources to reconstruct the times of Jesus

geographically, politically, socially, economically, intellectually, and religiously, both in and about Palestine. Indeed, this research is one of the outstanding instances of a most painstaking and prolonged application of the human mind to a difficult problem, comparable to the work of the natural scientists. It would seem now that, on the basis of data available, the last word has been said and that any further theorizing would be scarcely anything more than hazarding a guess. Perhaps it were about as well to rest the case until archæology furnishes more materials.

The task would be exceedingly alluring to retrace the long course of this research, noting the stages of its progress and estimating the varied contributions of scholars along the way. All we can do within reasonable limits is to undertake to set forth the net results of this Jesus-research. In the first place it ought to be said that it is all but unanimously agreed that the mythological Jesus has not been considered sufficient to account for the unquestionably large and vigorous Christian movement in the second century; nor has it been possible to dispose of the testimony of the non-Christian sources quite so summarily as has been done by W. B. Smith, A. Drews, and a few others. The nonbiblical Christian

sources are of great value also as corroborating testimonies to the validity of the biblical materials. The First Epistle of Clement of Rome to the Corinthians (c. 97 A. D.) is almost conclusive in its coroboration of the apostolic traditions. Of inestimable value also are the early second-century Christian writings.

As for the biblical materials, many scholars are ready to give up the Catholic and the Pastoral Epistles as being apostolic, but the main Pauline Epistles have stood the most severe testing ever applied to historical documents, and it is almost unanimously agreed that the general outline, or perhaps one should say the core, of the greater Pauline Epistles is genuine, and that their testimony to the historicity of Jesus is conclusive. The battle still rages considerably about the book of the Acts of the Apostles.

The greatest problem furnished by the New Testament is that of the Gospels. They were written from forty to seventy years after the events which they record. That was a long time in the ancient world, when records were not accurately kept. Furthermore, the unlikelihood of accurate accounts of deeds or words having been preserved was the greater because the expectation of the immediate return of Jesus in the clouds gave no occasion for

it. It is quite generally agreed that the fourth Gospel is a later interpretation rather than an historical account, mystical meditations on sayings and deeds, yet the length of the ministry according to that Gospel (two and one half years) is more likely correct than that the synoptic accounts would lead one to infer (about eight months). It is not likely that the crucifixion took place on the day of the feast of the Passover, as the synoptics indicate, but probably the day before, according to the fourth Gospel.

Greater problems still are furnished by the synoptic Gospels themselves. The texts as we have them are of second-century editing, and from fourth-century manuscripts, and later ones, giving abundant opportunity for all sorts of insertions and omissions. That the early Christians had no conscience about erasing what seemed to them erroneous, and adding what they thought ought to have been said, is indicated abundantly by the later handling of the Gospels and other writings. No doubt much later preaching was read back into the ministry of Jesus. Selections made from Jesus' teachings that were timely at the date of the composition of the accounts were included, and, of course, what was not at the time making a strong appeal would naturally be left

out in the process of selecting what to include. We may therefore have an unbalanced account. Matthew's Gospel shows a strong tendency to see that ancient prophecy was fulfilled, the author or authors assuming that Jesus must have done what was predicted of him. The Gospels written later show a growth in the miraculous; and words and phrases in later use were put unconsciously into the mouth of Jesus. Before the crucifixion "Take up thy cross" would have hardly been intelligible, and the reference to Jesus as "Lord" was, of course, of later origin. Luke has a strong sociological interest. Matthew's "poor in spirit" is "ye poor" in Luke's account. The Pauline glosses also furnish difficult problems, and vital ones too, when they involve modifying the simple meal which Jesus had with his disciples into a mystery communion.

On the basis of materials at hand it is not possible to determine with certainty the date of Jesus' birth, nor his age at the crucifixion. Not only does the dating of the different Gospels vary, but Luke's Gospel contradicts itself as to the date of Jesus' birth. If John the Baptist began his ministry "in the fifteenth year of Tiberius Cæsar" (3. 1), and if Jesus began his ministry shortly after and at the age of "about thirty years" (3. 23), he must have

been born four years after the death of Herod! If, on the other hand, Jesus was born at the time of the census of Augustus Cæsar, "when Quirinius was governor of Syria," he could have been only twenty-three years old instead of thirty when he began his ministry. According to Johannine tradition, Jesus lived to be near fifty years of age, passing through all the ages of man.[26] Irenæus argues at great length that Jesus lived to be fifty years old, "even as the Gospels and also all the elders testify." It was John in Asia "who conveyed to them that information." In the early part of Jesus' ministry, he is told that the Temple had been forty-six years building; in that case the date at the time was about 27 A. D. If he was near fifty years old, his birth must have taken place somewhere around 20 B. C. This is, of course, entirely possible; but we do not know. It is generally accepted that, taking all the data into account and judging the relative historical worth, the probable date of the birth was about 4 to 6 B. C. This is of slight consequence. What is of greater consequence is the fact that the Gospel accounts are not consistent. And this, together with many other such uncertainties, has very great religious value, as we shall indicate below.

[26] John 8. 57. Irenæus, Adv. Haer, bk. ii, xxii, 4, 5, 6.

Whether the first part of Jesus' ministry and the major part of it also took place in the south, as John says, or around Galilee principally, according to the synoptics, it is not possible to determine, or whether the ministry covered a period of eight months or so, or about two and a half years. It depends upon whether the Johannine or the synoptic tradition is most likely correct. According to the fourth Gospel, Jesus' crucifixion took place on the fourteenth Nisan, the day before the feast of the Passover, and, according to the synoptics, in the fifteenth Nisan, the day of the Passover. The gospel dates of the birth, the death, and postresurrection doings and sayings are at variance, so that the careful student is not able to construct any dependable accounts without estimating as best he can the historical value of the respective materials. What did Jesus consider to be his mission, to preach the doctrine of John the Baptist that the Messianic kingdom was near at hand? If that was what he meant by "kingdom of God," what part had man in its coming? Was it divine and catastrophical? Did it involve political relations, the overthrow of the Roman rule? Or was it spiritual? What part did he consider that he had in bringing about the conditions of its coming? Was he himself the Messiah?

Was he to come again after his resurrection as Messiah in the clouds of heaven? Did he come gradually to conceive of himself as Messiah? or was he made aware of it at his baptism? The synoptic Gospels, with their layer of traditions, give varying answers to all these questions. On the basis of materials at hand it is impossible to answer any of these and many such questions with certainty.

When we take up the teachings of Jesus we find similar difficulties. Which of the accounts shall we accept regarding the teaching about divorce? Which form of the Lord's Prayer is original, if any of them? Is the Lukan form of the Beatitudes or the report as given in Matthew's Gospel most likely original? Is the part of the denunciation of the scribes and Pharisees which is given solely by Matthew (23. 5-38) by Jesus, or is it an elaboration of some of his pronouncements by subsequent writers out of the bitter experiences of the later church? Is much of the teaching in the Sermon on the Mount interim ethics? Are these delineations intended to be permanent characteristics of the followers of Jesus, or was Jesus declaring policies most prudent under the peculiar circumstances of his followers in the midst of Jewish and Roman hostile populations?

There is far less agreement among New

Testament scholars concerning these questions than is the case among Old Testament students regarding the documentary theory of the Pentateuch. In America and in Europe there is a considerable school of New Testament authorities, too large to be ignored, who hold that Jesus was a thoroughgoing apocalypticist.

If we consider questions of the practical administration of his church like difficulties arise. Did Jesus found the church? Did he mean to reform the Jewish Church, or was he concerned with any organization at all? Did he intend to give the church its two ordinances or none at all, as many think? Did Jesus give the great universal commission to his disciples or was that commission in trinitarian form an expression of a later interest to give Jesus' sanction to what came to be the practice of the church? (Cf. Matt. 28. 19-20, with Mark. 16. 15-16.)

Is this painful uncertainty about who Jesus was and what he taught the only result of the one hundred and fifty years of research? Has it but brought us to know only that we cannot know? Is it true that all we are certain about is that we cannot be certain? Are we left hopelessly to flounder about in the dark? By no means is this the result. Possibly for those who have missed the way and who are

not willing to take the trouble to find it, this is the result of the long research. But for those who have ears to hear and eyes to see, exceedingly great positive values are involved. The revelation will be for the coming generation principally, but also for those of this generation whose minds are not closed to truth.

Divine Providence, manifested in the revelations made in the application of the scientific spirit and method in the study of the Scriptures, is preventing us, at a most crucial time, from continuing to dogmatize in an era of relativity when exact statements with the intention of universal assent and application cannot be made. To the coming age, and to the more intelligent man of our own time, dogma as final and definitive is not possible; and religion will not be either, if too largely complicated with dogma in the sense of doctrine authoritative and final. The mind is becoming restive under literal restrictions.

The traditional Christian attitude was wrongly called "faith." The modern attitude is that of open-minded inquiry. The hardening and crystallizing process of dogmatizing represents the older attitude of mind. The youth of to-day and everyone to-morrow will not endure it. The results of New Testament

study as indicated above have surely knocked the foundations from under this attitude of mind so foreign to the mind of Jesus, and at the same time made possible the further revelations which Jesus promised to his disciples. New Testament scholarship prevents such exactness as gives rise to religious stultification and what the sociologists call "ossification" of religious institutions. In other words, New Testament study in the scientific spirit makes possible a soul-stirring appreciation of Jesus, and at the same time leaves sufficient range of freedom of expression in thought and organization.

Again, schismatic contentiousness is gone for the informed man—this which has been one of the greatest curses to Christianity. At the present time it menaces the very existence of the faith in not a few countries of the world. That spirit which through the Inquisition alone "condemned to capital punishment" three hundred forty-one thousand persons, according to the figures of a Roman Catholic authority,[27] and otherwise punished its millions, will not much longer disgrace the Christian Church even in milder though not always less excruciating form. It is in its death struggles just now under the guise of Fundamentalism; but it is

[27] Alzog, *Church History*, vol. ii, pp. 986-87.

doomed as sure as intelligence goes "from more to more."

Along with Protestant Scholasticism and persecution will go Christian Pharisaism. Not much longer can any follower of Jesus Christ pride himself on his possession of "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth." The Gospels, like nature itself, are plastic in our hands. Our faith is not "ready made," but the materials only are given us to "make up." Devout and humble living as well as careful thinking are required, in order to come to a knowledge of the truth. As the world is given to entice us and all but compel us to exercise our God-given powers, and thus to develop them, so also are the Gospels. Only by the development of the whole personality can we come gradually to approximate the truth, and all the while the main divine purpose of growing godlike in character is being realized.

How prone too are we to live by a set of applied rules rather than to grow into self-government. The human mind has a peculiar desire for infallibility. It wants to be sure without taking the trouble to make sure. Ordered rules appeal to us more than general principles. But Jesus shows how easy it is to obey the rules and regulations and yet be far from the spirit. A citizen can obey the law

and keep out of jail, but at the same time be a very poor citizen. After all, it is the man who does not slavishly try to live by rule, but whose heart is overflowing with love, who rejoices to do the will of God; and it is he who lives the triumphant life of those who overcome the world. With ease they fulfill the law and more than fulfill it. This latter and better way we are all but compelled to by the providential condition of the Gospel materials. In the Gospels the grains of truth are hidden away like diamonds in the matrix. The zest and joy of discovery are experienced in their search; their value is enhanced for us by our own discovery of them.

When we think of it, we are inclined to be almost superstitious about the providential manner by which the masterful personality of Jesus is so clearly revealed in the Gospels that he brings the reader to his knees, and yet at the same time, by the same Gospels, the letter of his ethical and religious teachings is so impossible to follow that we are compelled to follow Jesus himself. Of course, we know in these days of natural law that all this has come about perfectly naturally, but that only magnifies a Providence who needs not to break with the usual processes in order to accomplish extraordinary results. It is still more wonderful that this impossibility of the letter is re-

vealed in our own time when we are able to profit spiritually by it, while former unscientific and uncritical generations, who were not ready for the greater revelation, found themselves able to live spiritually, to some degree, by the letter. The modern enlightened man is compelled to the spiritual else flounder in moral and religious unrest. The understanding of these things constitutes a soul-stirring call to lead the present age, which cannot return to the beggarly elements, forward to new levels of Christian living by means of this New Revelation of Jesus.

Now, when the gospel has been brought to a very large part of the world, it is extremely important for the conquest of the world for Christ that, not the letter of rules, regulations, disciplines, and creeds, which may be of value to people in some particular sort of civilization, be forced upon peoples of differing civilizations, but that Jesus himself be lifted up, and the peoples be permitted to apply the spirit of Jesus to their several situations. Thus may we confidently trust Jesus "to draw all men" unto himself.

20. A Fundamental Objection to Jesus' Teachings

Perhaps the most serious objections to the ideals of Jesus have to do with his quite sharp

reversal of ancient ideals both Jewish and pagan, namely, his teachings about humility, meekness, nonresistance and kindred virtues. The strictures take two forms: either they are not the ideal, or, if they are, they are not realizable, and we should not expect them to be. This attitude is well illustrated by Bradley: "We are not Christians, and we know perfectly well that we should not be." We may state the ancient ideal, and if we do so in broad outlines, it will apply equally to Jewish and pagan ethics.

The man admired and honored in ancient times, according to both Greek and Jewish ethical teachings, was he who was materially prosperous, an evidence to the Jew of God's approval of him, and to the pagan of the man's superior abilities; the man who dispensed his goods rather freely and just a little ostentatiously for charity and for the public good; the man of good reputation and held in honorable esteem; the one quite conscious, but not too much so, of his superiority to the commonalty; the man with largeness of mind and elevation of soul, without being exactly disdainful; the man living self-poised above the vicissitudes of life; the man with a considerable degree of power over his fellows without being too oppressive; and the man who, to the Jew

more especially, was punctual and just a little ostentatious in his religious observances. After all, this sounds rather modern; perhaps there has not been much change. Possibly the ancient ideal has become the present real.

It was to this ideal, especially to the exaggerations of it, that Jesus opposed his teaching. His strictures were against those who were luxuriously rich, high-minded to the point of haughtiness, ostentatiously and hypocritically religious, and disdainfully charitable. And yet his ideal is radically different. It will have to be acknowledged that historical Christianity has caricatured Jesus' ideal all out of proportion, and thus perverted it out of recognition. Service too often has been debased into servitude; spiritual resistance into nonresistance; absence of anxiety about worldly affairs into improvidence and beggary; the danger of riches into chosen poverty; meekness into abject cringing; his rigorism for those unable to be temperate into total abstinence and celibacy. It is no matter of surprise, in view of these perversions, that it has become commonly believed, if not always openly expressed, that Jesus' ideal is impracticable. These perversions make it extremely hard to clearly delineate Jesus' teachings. It is difficult to find words that have not been associated with the corrupted ideal.

Let it be noted that Jesus' ideal is not that of inactive, improvident passivity. Professor J. A. Robertson characterizes "The Attitude to Christ" fifty years ago:

> The general attitude to Christ was still controlled by the creeds and by the older view of the Scripture which was not dissipated by criticism. In men's view of God there was still a great gulf fixed between the Creator and his creatures. Christ was regarded as standing in the sphere of the Godhead. . . . The main stress was laid on the deity of Jesus. Not that his humanity was entirely ignored. But it suffered in proportion to the extent in which the emphasis was laid on his deity. . . . We tended to think of him as an amiable and winning soul, delicate in features, sensitive as a woman, a frail, slight form, emaciated, pale and worn; inconspicuous as a root out of a dry ground; sad-spirited, one who had never been seen to laugh, but oftentimes to weep; unassertive, shrinking from the storm of the world's hate and scorn which broke about his short and tragic way; a lamb for whom the rough untempered winds of the world were to prove too much in the end. . . . It is within the last forty years that we have struggled to get back to the historical Jesus.[28]

No wonder is it that the mediæval Monk on the cross and the Protestant Lamb of God has been so largely "despised and rejected of men."

If we take the historical gospel accounts, rather than Isaiah's prophecies about the suffering servant, for our portrait of Jesus, we see a

[28] British Weekly, November 11, 1926.

man of great vigor, as shown "in the straight and powerful language which he uses to men, in the sweep and range of his mind, in the profundity of his insight, in the drive and compulsion of his thinking, in the venturesomeness of his actions." [29] Jesus' vigor is shown in his condemnation of those who do not get things done (Luke 12. 47); those who are behindhand (Luke 13. 25); those who have no stability (Mark 4. 6); those who promise but do not accomplish (Matt. 21. 28); the Pharisees who "say and do not." He admires the persistency of the "importunate widow," the friend demanding the loan of loaves, and even the rigor of the man who hacks off his right hand rather than to fail to enter into "life." Mark's Gospel portrays the masterly tread of the strong Son of God who does mighty deeds, spake as never man spake, and who deliberately chooses the cross for himself. The teachings of Jesus must be read in the light of his personality.

Jesus' ethical ideal must be considered also in the light of his religion. (See next chapter.) They are sons of God who imitate God, who acts from no spirit of revenge, but does good even to his enemies, sending rain and sunshine alike upon the fields of the just and the unjust.

[29] T. R. Glover, *Jesus of History*, p. 130.

Jesus gives us the impression that his way of living is not the easy way, the safe way, or immediately the most pleasant or materially rewarding; but it is the deliberate choice of One who is well aware of the difficulties. He is perfectly certain, however, that his way is the only one which in the long run will bring peace, prosperity, and blessedness to mankind. Believing that like begets like, he saw that to fight evil with evil is only to increase evil. "They who take the sword shall perish by the sword." This is God's world; love is at the heart of the universe; the only way to live satisfactorily in God's world is to imitate Him whose loving care for every man is as if he numbered the very hairs of the head.

Jesus' ethical ideal must be studied in the light of his own conduct. He taught quite as much by his life as by word of mouth. By no means does he quietly and passively acquiesce in the presence of evil. He recognized the foolhardiness of attempting to throw off the Roman yoke, but he saw also the duty which Jews owed to Rome for benefits received, as symbolized by the coin which he inveigled a Jew to take from his own pocket. He scarcely allowed himself to be called the Messiah, lest an insurrection be raised in his name and thwart his spiritual mission. We note, on the

other hand, after making due allowance for later elaborations, his scathing rebuke of the leaders of religion; and even before Pilate, according to the fourth Gospel, although his execution was a foregone conclusion, he explained that his Kingdom was not an earthly one, and that his followers were not raising an insurrection. According to the fourth Gospel (18. 23), he rebuked the man who struck him in the face without cause. In the cleansing of the Temple doubtless it was his flaming righteous anger, rather than, according to John, the whip of small cords (apparently used on the animals only), that overawed the money-changers, whose consciences, like Macbeth's, made cowards of them all.

The circumstances of those addressed should also be taken into account. While no one would suppose that Jesus was advising the use of prudential casuistry, some of his exhortations are evidently made not only in the light of the peculiar situation of the Jewish nation, but of his own followers who were not only in the midst of the unsympathetic Roman dominion, but also were as sheep among the Jewish "wolves." The exhortation to "agree with thine adversary quickly" (Matt. 5. 25, 26) is of this nature, and as for going two miles with the Roman soldier, there could be

no better way of breaking down "morale" than this sort of "fraternizing." Furthermore, by choosing to do two miles when required to do one is to assert one's own will, and thus to change one's status from servitude to freedom. The exhortation, however, is in harmony with Jesus' method of winning by a superabundance of love and service. Probably also the admonitions to unstinted and all but limitless giving had reference to the peculiar situation of the members of the new movement. Doubtless the missionaries in China who now are no longer under the protection of the military forces of the United States will have occasion to note how well the Sermon on the Mount applies to their situation. It should be borne in mind that those to whom Jesus was speaking had no part in government, and that, while Jesus said little about civil government, all he did say was in its favor. Jesus' own choice of spiritual force rather than physical, and his exhortation to his disciples to the same choice, need not necessarily imply that he would have no one employ physical force for the control or resistance of evil. The best means to use with reference to aggressive evil may depend upon circumstances and upon the degree of the moral and spiritual dynamics of the individual. Doubtless only the unquestionably brave man

with a very forceful personality could turn the other cheek, or use any other spiritual means, without being despised.

Jesus decided that, in bringing in the kingdom of God, the means which were in harmony with the end to be attained, which would not defeat the purpose in view, and which were in harmony with his personality and those of his disciples were love and the corollaries thereof, and that these were the most potent forces for his followers to use. Jesus deliberately chose the way of love as God's way and his. All his ethical teachings flow naturally from the spirit of love.

> Love at its purest and best is the valuing of persons for their own sakes without any material benefits to ourselves in view. It is the social attitude of unselfish and passionate devotion to the welfare of others. It is the purified love of which religion speaks and which the scientific sociologist must sooner or later recognize as the essential redemptive motive in our human world.[30]

This was Jesus' way. He would live no other way; he would employ no other means than love and its corollaries. He disciplined himself till love for him was almost as natural as self-seeking is to the "man of the world." It was not merely principle with him, it was the

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[30] C. A. Ellwood: *Christianity and Social Science*, p. 117.

overflowing of his heart into which the love of God had poured.

If we study the great hymns of love by Plato, Saint Paul, and Saint Bernard, or consider love from the point of view of modern psychology, how quickly we see that humility based on love is a virtue and is not humiliation; that meekness or mildness which flows from love is preferable to brusqueness and brutality; that one disarms the enemy more quickly by generosity than by retaliation; that there is no hypocrisy in love; that love leads to mercifulness, peacemaking, and justice; indeed, that, as Paul says, now rightly interpreting the spirit of Jesus, "Love is the fulfilling of the law."

> Now all possible doubt that the way of love, without stint or limit, is the way of Jesus is completely gone. I have found people from every corner of the world living in terms of it whose lives have become redemptive powers because of the fact. I have seen it tried under the hardest and bitterest experiences in race and industrial conflict and again it has proved a healing influence. And on the other hand I have seen what the opposite does to people.[31]

Jesus, having undoubting confidence in the power of love, insists on kindness to the very last degree; he believed it would win. There is no suggestion that Jesus would forbid the exer-

[31] Paul Jones, in *The Christian Century*, March 8, 1928, p. 311. Reprinted by permission.

cise of physical force by the proper political authorities; but that they should go to the length of taking life by way of legal execution or war is contrary to the spirit of Jesus' teachings. Punitive rather than remedial punishment, whether by the state or by the individual, has been found to be productive of criminality rather than a prevention of crime.

Bernard Shaw is reported to have said recently: "I am not a Christian, any more than Pilate was, or than you are, gentle reader. But I am ready to admit, after studying the world of human misery for sixty years, that I see no way out of the world's troubles but the way Jesus would have found, had he undertaken the work of a modern practical statesman."[32] If the savage Indians spared the Quakers once and again when they discovered that they were "Broad-brims, William Penn's people," may it not be that resort solely to moral and spiritual resistance in international affairs would not be casting "pearls before swine"? At any rate, we are inclined to agree with Rufus Jones when he says that there is a place in this world for a group of people (Quakers) committed to the way of love. More and more clearly it is being understood that Jesus' way was not non-

[32] Reprinted by permission of the author.

resistance, but the very most effective sort of resistance, when employed by a Jesus kind of person.

21. Jesus Living His Religion

Whatever may have been originally the case, in the Gospels as we have them there are two streams of tradition. One is by those who saw in Jesus' teaching and in his life a portrayal of the conditions of entrance into the coming catastrophical Messianic kingdom when God himself, or through some agency, probably the risen Jesus, would interfere on behalf of his people and break the Roman yoke. The other interest was in the conditions, as set forth by Jesus, of entrance into an ideal human society here on earth and at the same time into life eternal with the Father in heaven. Our own supreme interest is, of course, in the help we may obtain in our own situation without supposing for a minute that Jesus was speaking to our condition. We do not wish for authority, but for freedom to work out our salvation. We must live our own life and stand responsible for it. But if we may receive any suggestions which we may appropriate and make our own, we should be foolish not to take them.

If, on the one hand, Jesus is preaching

primarily, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of God is at hand," nevertheless he is setting forth that which God expects of human beings, and because of the nearness of the coming of the Kingdom, he states the conditions in absolute form, without exceptions, without compromise with lesser earthly relations and obligations; that is to say, because of the apocalyptic element we have before us Jesus' absolute ideal, "Be ye perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect." The "interim" phase does not mar the teaching.

If, on the other hand, Jesus is setting forth the conditions of entering into eternal life and into an ideal social situation on earth, we may find something which we may make our own. On account of the impossibility of knowing in detail, or with certainty, just what Jesus taught, we must judge for ourselves what is true and helpful. Even if there were no such uncertainties, we should need to make Jesus' ethics and religion our own, else we should be his slaves and not his friends. We shall need to ask, then, what suggestions are there for us in Jesus' religion?

It has been said that Jesus placed ethics before religion, citing his exhortation to leave the gift at the altar and become reconciled "to thy brother and then come and offer thy gift."

While it is true that he put ethics before the formalities of religion, he blends the two into one way of life, not distinguishing sharply between ethics and religion. This is to say that Jesus' religion is supremely an ethical one. In this he considered himself in the succession of the prophets rather than the priests. Indeed, he referred to himself as a prophet in citing the saying about prophets not being without honor save in their own country. Twice he refers to the saying, "I will have mercy and not sacrifice"; and not only in the Lord's Prayer, but also in a parable he links human and divine forgiveness (Matt. 18. 23-25). The truest kind of divine service is the blending of ethics and religion in the relief of human needs (cf. the parable of the sheep and the goats). Jesus' religious teachings are the natural and logical corollaries of divine love. His ethics are corollaries of human love; and human love has its flavor, quality, and sanction in divine love. This is the substance of Jesus' teachings, and it is truth absolute, ultimate, and final. There is nothing to add and nothing to take away. It is perfect; it is universal; and it is timeless.

Jesus does not argue the existence or the personality of God. He has no philosophical interest, but begins with the commonly ac-

cepted idea of the existence of God. He does not discuss the oneness of God except to remind people of it and its implication of undivided allegiance and devotion "with all the heart." Jesus has no scientific interest; he does not reason from nature to God except to emphasize love to all, even to enemies, as does God who sends rain and sunshine both to the evil man and the good, and to illustrate the loving care of Him who clothes the grass and feeds the birds. Although Jesus' outlook on the world is not scientific, it is interesting to note that his intuitive view of God as being in and all through nature is strangely in harmony with the modern evolutionary conception of a continuous creation.

While Jesus' God is the God of the Jews, his new emphasis presents a conception of God which was new and startling. No Greek or barbarian philosopher or religionist had ever suspected such nearness and immediacy of God, who makes the sun to rise, the rain to fall, and who sees and loves even the wayside flower and the tiniest bird. Jesus lived in God's world, in which God was the greatest, truest, and most evident reality, whom one should trust without anxious fear. "Personal as the Hebrew prophets have made God, none of them dreamed of a God so intensely real, so bound-

lessly personal, so amazingly akin to man."[33] Who had ever thought of God's great concern and love for the sinner who needed him the more, even as the sick needed the physician? How marvelously is this portrayed in the parable of the prodigal son—one of the world's most beautiful pieces of literature; and in that haunting little pastorale, the parable of the ninety and nine! Jesus' longing love for the sinner, even for the publican and the harlot, was but a corollary of God's love, and it was possible for him to love the fallen woman because he was so pure. But God is righteous. He who can love also must be able to hate, not men, but evil. It cannot be with the wicked as with the righteous; there are moral distinctions and no moral confusion, and Jesus sounded the warning. In God's moral order righteousness brings its reward and wickedness its consequences. Jesus' religion is a life lived up to the implications of love of God and man.

It may be objected that Jesus lived in a prescientific age of the world, in a rural section, in a mild climate, in a middle-class happy family supported comfortably by honest toil, and that he was naturally good and pious, not knowing the temptations of the flesh. Perhaps it might give us a greater appreciation of Jesus,

[33] T. R. Glover, *Jesus in the Experience of Man*, p. 101.

and reveal our own obligation to faithfulness, if we consider for a moment the world in which Jesus lived and note the struggles he made to hold himself up to the practical implications of his religion.

It was a prescientific age, and for that reason it was harder to trust. The unscientific mind lives in the midst of superstitious terrors which it is difficult for us to conceive, who live in a world of invariable law under the care of a God not of caprice, but of order. The dependableness of universal law makes trust easy, comparatively. The discovery that this is a universe and not a chaos was one of the major revelations of God in modern times. Professor Harnack has shown the marvelous beneficence of Jesus' ministry of casting out "demons" from those who were ill or insane (see his *Mission and Expansion*). Those who were ill endured the greater evil of thinking that they were in God's disfavor and were being punished for some sin; and was it not enough to drive them to insanity to believe that their fever was caused by the devils carousing within them? How Jesus could have shared these unscientific views and at the same time lived in calm and serene trust above them, having no fear of the devils, is marvelous in our eyes.

Let it not be thought for a minute that the natural world was altogether a friendly one. From Jesus' parables we know that he was not unaware of the hardness of some soil, the presence of thorns, the scorching of the withering tropical sun, floods, and storms. He knew about the falling of the tower of Siloam killing eighteen people.

Jesus had the experience of the opposition of his own family to his mission. Some people even thought that he had gone crazy (Mark 3. 21). He understood intimately and sympathetically the poverty of the woman who searched a very long time for the lost penny. Evidently, he had not failed to observe the oppression of the poor; the evils of social and race distinctions. He lived the major part of his life within a few miles of the capital of the province. We cannot be certain whether he was a mere child or near adolescence when the zealots seized the military stores of Sepphoris and raised a revolt which was suppressed with blood and fire, the city being burned, and the remaining population enslaved. At any rate, it was splendidly rebuilt during Jesus' young manhood, and he must often have heard the story of the excruciating suffering of the former inhabitants. Indeed, it is entirely possible that "The Carpenter" and his brothers may

have aided in the rebuilding, and heard many a sad story. During his entire life the patriotic people of Palestine lived under the heels of Roman governors, whose tyranny was the greater as the dangers of revolt became the more ominous. No. Jesus did not live in the delightful "Arcadia" of the Greek imagination.

In spite of the unfavorable circumstances of his life, Jesus attained and maintained a unique relationship of love and trust of the heavenly Father. One of such clear spiritual insight could not have been guilty of expressing his unique relationship to the Father in such self-conscious ways as he is reported to have done by the Gospel writers who were doubtless reading back into Jesus' lifetime the devotion of the early church to him. They were doubtless right in characterizing Jesus as having and as being conscious of having a relationship to God which was distinctly unique; as having found the way to joyous, triumphant, and useful life; and as living and dying redemptively. If we disregard the forms of expression we find the four Gospels agreeing in these matters. He says, "I am the way," that is, my way of living is the way for all to live. Heaven and earth are not more enduring than these truths (Mark 8. 35). Take up my

way of living. "Follow me." It is the pure in heart, he who is like God, a Son of God, who "knows the Father" (Mark 11. 27), and such an one, who knows God's mind and will, has power on earth to proclaim the forgiveness of sins.

Perhaps the greatest wonder about Jesus' religion is the fact that he shows none of the peculiarities and shortcomings of genius and none of the psychopathic characteristics of specialists in religion. If there was anything abnormal about Jesus, it was that he was so totally and uniformly normal. Instead of despising or even disparaging woman, Jesus showed an appreciation of her as no one else in antiquity. He never speaks disrespectfully about women, or even lightly; and never warns men against them. For Jesus children are not a disturbing element in the spiritual life; but from them he learns much. There is none of the asceticism of the very religious man about Jesus. He eats and drinks freely; attends the long and joyous wedding celebration; is found in the market place; attends the national celebrations at Jerusalem; and wherever men are found there he is wont to be, even among the sinners who especially needed him. So far from despising the material world, nowhere in ancient times is there anything like Jesus' own

wide and minute knowledge of and appreciation of nature. The mediæval Saint Francis is the one saint who can be compared with Jesus in this respect. From memory one may recall seventy or eighty natural objects to which Jesus refers in his teaching. In spite of some opinion to the contrary, it cannot be substantiated that there was anything psychopathic about Jesus. He experienced very great disappointment. He could not always do the service he desired because of the unbelief of the people. He was not able to reform the Jewish Church or to see the full coming of the Kingdom. It grieved him to see people turn away when spiritual matters were being considered. The fearful faithlessness of his chosen few disappointed him. His prayers were not always answered in the desired form (Gethsemane). Yet he ever gives evidence of inward calm, peace, and joy arising from his faith in God and out of his uniform victory over temptation, all of which gave the impression that he had overcome the world.

It was not easy for Jesus constantly to live up to the implications of his faith in Fatherly friendliness at the heart of the universe. The synoptics agree that Jesus was severely tempted. Whether the assurance which Jesus experienced at the time of the baptism that he

was God's beloved Son had Messianic significance, or whether it was a full realization of that Sonship which Jesus craved for all who would be willing to be like God, the fact remains that Jesus suffered severe instances of the temptation which comes to every son of God to doubt the reality of God's fatherly love. If I am the son of God, why my poverty, my hunger; why the inexorable uniformity of the processes of nature; why these natural limitations; why should not God preserve me from danger if I fall? During his whole ministry Jesus was not free from these temptations. The most severe temptation which Jesus suffered was at the close of his life, on the cross. For a moment he seems to have lost faith, crying, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was but for an instant; and then again he asserts his marvelous faith in the goodness of God, and cries, "Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit."

If we consider the time, place, the social, political, and economic circumstances of Jesus' earthly life and the exceedingly sharp keenness of his disappointments, may we not say that for few could it have been harder to live up to the truth of the fatherly goodness of God and his intimate concern for every one of his children? Surely, he hath borne our sorrows

and was acquainted with our griefs, and has shown us the way to live.

The response of the world to Jesus and to the cause for which he gave his life is one of the greatest proofs of the spark of divinity in man, of goodness at the heart of the universe, and of the truth of Jesus' religion. It should also be an encouragement to believe in the practicability of Jesus' ideal, and an incentive to imitate him in its practice.

CHAPTER THREE

CHAPTER III

THE NEW REVELATION OF JESUS AND THE NEW RENAISSANCE

22. The Challenge of Jesus to "Christianity"

What is Christianity? All through this book we have been assuming that by Christianity was meant the religion of the churches calling themselves Christian, the commonly accepted religion of those who considered themselves Christians. If in the Middle Ages the ideal Christian was the monk, and real Christianity monkery, still Christianity included those provisions which made for good and regular standing in heaven for those who lived out in the world. The vicarious atonement made for sins by the sufferings of Jesus and the availability by way of indulgences of the "superabundance of the merits of Jesus and the saints" are aspects of Christianity. It is hardly fair to judge Buddhism, Hinduism, or Mohammedanism by the civilization of the countries where they severally predominate; nor should anyone make Christianity and the civilization of Christendom synonymous terms. A religion in fairness should be judged by the

presentation of it by its leaders, and the representation of it by its organization. So that by Christianity we mean the religion of the churches as commonly accepted by the churches as a whole, and as portrayed by the leaders in the churches. Christianity, then, has varied to some degree from age to age, and, of course, is to-day variously represented by the Greek Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and by the numerous Protestant churches. While we Protestants think that there is a considerable difference among the churches, to a sociologist, a historian, a Catholic, or a non-Christian, the differences among Protestant churches seem relatively slight. It is possible to portray the general features of American Protestantism. To be sure, there are people in every denomination who recognize that there is a difference between real Christianity and the commonly accepted religion, but this does not prevent a sort of composite picture being taken of Protestant Christianity.

If we but think of it for a minute we must recognize the fact that Jesus himself had nothing to say about the matters which have been the chief objects of interest in Christianity; the virgin birth, the deity of Jesus, the Trinity, the incarnation, the blood atone-

ment, the pre-existence of Jesus, orders, apostolic succession, the real presence in the Eucharist, the inspiration of the Scriptures, the fall of man, total depravity, predestination and foreordination, church government, etc. That Jesus gave these and similar matters no thought is not to say that therefore they are of no concern; and yet if they were of such momentous importance as the churches have seemed to think they are, surely, he would most certainly have given them some attention. Evidently, if these matters are the chief concern in Christianity there is a considerable difference between Jesus' religion and Christianity.

There are a great many other features of the Christianity of the churches which would seem to be contrary to the ideals of Jesus and which he would repudiate, if we may trust in a general way the impression of him which the Gospels present. In the Greek and Roman Churches the main test in the church is belief; with Jesus it was life and conduct. Belief in the church as a whole, including a considerable section of Protestant churches, is the assent of the mind; to Jesus it means self-committing faith. In the church the end all too often is the institution itself; with Jesus the end is service of man in the love of God. Too fre-

quently in the church the main thing seems to be the building up of the organization itself in material equipment and numbers and the maintenance of the services and the ordinances; while the spirit of Jesus is indicated by his saying, "The Sabbath was made for man—not man for the Sabbath." He would say the same with reference to the organized church. Christian ethics is largely negative; Jesus' positive. The church too often shuns the poor and needy and not infrequently moves away from them, quite contrary to the method of Jesus, who gave these classes special attention. The church shuns the wicked, but to Jesus it was "the sick" who need the physician. In the very churches themselves there are social distinctions; with Jesus there were moral distinctions only. While it is true that there are church members in the front ranks of those battling against an evil which may yet wreck our civilization, it must be acknowledged that in the churches race prejudice has a large place, at least in practice; Jesus believed in the brotherhood of man. Christianity is one of the very most sectarian of all religions; Jesus emphasized unity and fellowship in service and worship. In Christian preaching the predominating note has been fear; with Jesus it was love. In Christianity salvation has often been

extremely selfish; Jesus stressed service. Christianity has been other-worldly in theory and worldly in practice; Jesus would have us live here and now the eternal life. Imputed righteousness has been a much-sounded note in Christianity; it is real righteousness in which Jesus was interested. In Christianity the interest has been in a plan of salvation whereby one may escape the consequences of sin; it was sin itself that Jesus wished to cure. The church trusts in the power of might, and cannot bring itself to Jesus' trust in the overcoming power of goodness, service, and love. Christianity has been called "a religion of war." Probably no religionists have ever fought with carnal weapons among themselves any more than have Christians. The Orient still fears this warlike religion. Would that Ancient Oriental, whose heart was aflame with the love of God and of man, if he came to earth to-day, care to be considered a "Christian"? Yes! If we may judge by his relation to the Jewish Church of his time, he would be a Catholic in a Catholic community, or a Protestant in a Protestant community, or a Jew in a Jewish community, as long as he would be tolerated. But he would surely challenge the religion of our day to correct its too many departures from his spirit.

Jesus, new-born in our time, is challenging Christians to believe in him, to believe him, and to follow his way of life. The most hopeful sign, though now on too distant an horizon, that our civilization may be preserved from self-destruction, lies in the fact that at least a small section of the church, and that section is distributed throughout many different denominations, has come to understand the differences between Christianity and the religion of Jesus. Once again, modern disciples of Jesus are exclaiming, "We have seen the Lord." There has been in our time a new resurrection of Jesus, and we may with confidence believe that there will be new "Acts of the Apostles." Just as when the ancient learning was revealed to mediæval Europe there was a Renaissance, and when Erasmus' critical edition of the New Testament revealed the vast difference between the mediæval church and that of the apostolic age the Protestant Reformation ensued; so now the New Revelation of Jesus through modern scholarship and practical devotion will result in a Christian Renaissance whose beneficent influence will bless all mankind. How speedily this is consummated depends to no small extent upon how soon the church discovers the new-born King and worships him.

23. The Challenge of Jesus to the Church

What the church will do about this New Revelation of Jesus is of tremendous significance. The shortsighted judgment of those who consider that what the church does is of not much consequence is often the result of heart-rending disappointment about the church. More sober judgment will lead these despisers to consider that it does make a great difference what this greatest organization in the world will do. In the church is tremendous power, at least potentially, with its thousand millions of dollars worth of equipment, with trained leaders, supported by the upper middle class of the population, and in our country touching seventy-five per cent of the population. In the war days the government was wise enough to see the power of the spoken word of the minister in the propagation of the war spirit, for recruiting for the army and for the sale of Liberty Bonds. The legislators at Washington have become conscious of the great power wielded by the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America in matters which the churches consider have vital moral significance for the people. Surely, in the greatest matter of all, the acceptance, the hindering, or the rejection of the New Revela-

tion of Jesus, the church stands for "the rising and falling" of many.

Reasoning from similar historical situations is a dangerous proceeding, for no two situations are exactly alike, and yet probably we may expect the church to do approximately as it ever has done when in the providence of God new revelations have come. In the fourth Gospel it is said of Jesus that "He came to his own, but his own received him not, but to as many as did receive him"—"to as many as did receive him," they are the hope of the world. The Jewish Church rejected Jesus, but "as many as did receive him" became the foundation upon which the future was built. Martin Luther came to his own, the mediæval Roman Catholic Church, and his own received him not, but "as many as did receive him" became the foundation of the new age. John Wesley came to his own, the English Church, and his own received him not, "but as many as did receive him" were the inaugurators of a movement which was one of the chief reasons why the eighteenth-century predictions of the extinction of Christianity were not fulfilled. So was it with Roger Williams, Horace Bushnell, and the host of martyrs of the higher criticism who saved not only the Bible, but religion too for intelligent and ethically minded people.

Reinhold Niebuhr thinks that there must be a minority movement for rebuilding the social order, for "It [the church] is too deeply enmeshed with the interests and prejudices of contemporary civilization to possess the insight and courage which the enterprise requires."[1] Although Niebuhr believes that religion is dying because it has not been able, on the whole, to state its "affirmations so that they will be consistent with modern scientific fact," and "because it has not been able to make its ethical and social resources available for the solution of the . . . problems of modern civilization," he is nevertheless hopeful, believing that "there are resources in the Christian religion which make it the inevitable basis of any regeneration of Western civilization."[2]

Canon Streeter says:

> The greatest blot on the history of the church in modern times is the fact that with the glorious exception of the campaign to abolish slavery the leadership in the social, political, and humanitarian reforms of the last century and a half in Europe have rarely been professing Christians; while the authorized representatives of organized Christianity have as often as not been on the wrong side.[3]

[1] *Does Civilization Need Religion?* p. 226. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 220 and 234.

[3] *Spirit*, p. 358. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

There are a few other exceptions besides the "glorious" one to which Streeter alludes.

In the New Revelation Jesus is coming again to his own, and what will his own do with him? The time is come—is overdue—when the issue should be made just as clear as can be, so that there shall be just as little misunderstanding as possible. The time is past for speaking guardedly and in such fashion as to insinuate the message into the heart, while escaping the mind, or in such ways as the initiated will understand and the others will not much more than suspect that the older orthodoxy is being neglected. There should be simple, straightforward presentation of the Gospel truths with their implications in personal and social ethics, *always with the persuasiveness of overflowing love.*

Doubtless, there will ever be those whose situation in life is so agreeable to them that they will not be willing to pay the price of following Jesus. Apparently, in this world religion is to be a matter of faith, and as long as that is the case there will be chances for choice between the material and the spiritual. It would seem that for an indefinite time there would be those in the world and in the church who will not be willing to make the material sacrifice for spiritual gain either to themselves

or for others. At least we may be certain that this is the case at the present time.

It is not that the things which the church emphasizes are all of them wrong; but the emphasis is wrong. The things of great moment are relegated into the background and things relatively indifferent are brought into the foreground. This becomes a matter of morals when important matters are crowded out by the trivial. When love, fellowship, co-operation in saving sinners are displaced by shibboleths it becomes sinful. To rend the church over things about which Jesus said nothing, or which he even condemned, is a crime against God and humanity.

"The radical difference in the teachings of Jesus Christ and that of the church is this: Jesus taught how to live; the churches have taught men how to think; Jesus tested men by their lives; the churches have tested them by their beliefs."[4] "If Jesus should come back again to see the things done in his name, hear the creeds rehearsed about him, . . . and watch the rituals performed to his glory, his continual cry about much of it would be, 'If this is Christianity, then I am no Christian.'"[5]

[4] Lyman Abbott: *What Christianity Means to Me,* p. 20. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

[5] Harry Emerson Fosdick, *Adventurous Religion,* p. 322. Reprinted by permission of the author.

Once and again has the church of to-day been indicted by earnest souls. It is doubtless true that the church is bound too much by outworn creeds and has all too little of the open mind; that dogmatism characterizes her rather than freedom of thought. The church is taking social, economic, and international problems all too lightly. The moral standards of her members are all too slightly distinguishable from those of the world. Naturally, just in so far as she is the church of the people, she is under the dominance of the dominant class. The church is all too well pleased with herself, for she is a little sensitive to criticism, but she is by no means hopelessly incapable of self-criticism.

It would be possible to go to great lengths listing the shortcomings of the present-day church. But that is not the just way to proceed. We know what a thing is only when we know how it used to be, how it came to be as it is, and the direction in which it is tending. In other words, the historical perspective is essential to good judgment. The truth is that, with very notable local exceptions at various times in history, the Christian Church as a whole to-day is less creed-bound, less dogmatic, more liberal and free in thought; more conscious of its mission to save the world in all

its social, economic, and political aspects; feels more keenly its responsibility to carry the gospel to the whole world; has higher moral standards; is more conscious of its sins and more self-critical; and even less dominated by class-rule than at any time since the period of the early church. The church, therefore, although in a sorrowful plight in many respects, can be saved for the religion of Jesus if those devoted to Jesus will have patience and persistence.

In the churches of America to-day are to be found intelligent, open-minded, moral, and religiously susceptible people. In the church, therefore, is the best place to proclaim the religion of Jesus. Jesus began with the church; Paul also, and Luther, and the reformers. With the possible exception of the home, the church to-day, with all its imperfections, is probably less remote from the Spirit of Jesus than any other of our social institutions. To ignore the church, or to neglect it, is to make a very great tactical error. To win the church to the acceptance of the religion of Jesus it is worth while to make great effort and no little sacrifice. If we may judge by the past the church will furnish at least a group who will do most for the advancement of Jesus' religion.

But what would the churches do to Jesus if he came in humble guise again and preached

in modern language the eternal truths he preached so long ago? The common people, we are sure, would again "hear him gladly"; but what about those of us who are the modern leaders of the church, the present-day equivalent of the position occupied by the scribes and Pharisees of Jesus' day? Would we find ourselves in sympathy with Jesus? This is a question which should not be taken too lightly. Will the ministry lead the church to accept the New Revelation of Jesus?

Modern psychology has taught us one thing which history should have revealed long ago, that it is to the younger generation to whom, for psychological and economic reasons, we must look for the most significant improvement and advance. Jesus was a young man; so was Paul when he began his mission; and so were Luther, and Calvin, and Wesley, and the first foreign missionaries to go from our shores. If some older ones of us shall help work out in theory the New Revelation of Jesus, it will be young people in the church and out of it, in the ministry and out of it, who will do most to advance the cause. We may expect that it will be the Orient and the youth of the Occident who will do most to show the way to the realization of Jesus' religion in practical living.

One need not be a historian, but have only a

moderately accurate memory running back two-score years or so to observe a number of changes in a number of the Protestant churches which are scarcely less than right-about-face. Let us instance the attitude of denominations one toward another; the changed attitude toward science, for example, evolution; the welcoming the contributions of the higher critics, etc.

24. The Challenge of Jesus to the Ministry

With all the local color there is in the Gospels and with all the unusual circumstances in which the Jews were placed, there is remarkably little in the Gospels which is purely temporary. Even that which is peculiarly local and for the particular situation nearly always has in it some suggestion of universal principles. This may be credited to the fact that the Gospels were written after some years had elapsed and time had done some sifting of the permanent materials; or more probably, because of the nature of the teaching of Jesus itself in its depths of penetration and in the scope of its universality.

In our time there is one feature of Jesus' teaching which has been considered to be of a temporary nature, namely, the repeated warn-

ings by Jesus of the cost of discipleship. To-day we often think of discipleship in the guise of church membership, as a respectable thing, even commendatory, and rewarding from a worldly standpoint. Along with exhortations to honesty as the best policy because it pays financially are mingled the arguments for the value of religion for the "life that now is and for the life that is to come." There is a half-suppressed feeling that if there have been those who have suffered for their faith or convictions in modern times it has been because they have not been sufficiently pedagogical in their presentation of their faith, or discreet enough to be "wise as serpents and harmless as doves." In pagan times it was different, they say; and as for Jesus, there were theological reasons why he, the Lamb of God, should suffer for the sins of the world. It will probably be agreed, however, that it was the difference between Jesus' ideals and the religion of the time that led him to the cross. The Pharisees were doing their utmost to bring about the absolute obedience of the people to the Law in order that God might interfere on behalf of their nation. Given their premises, they were right when they concluded that Jesus' influence was preventing this consummation. They also felt that Jesus' teachings would in time under-

mine their special privileges, which they were enjoying. And as for Pilate, no doubt he thought it just as well to play it safe, and forestall any possible revolution; and he was not averse to currying a little favor with the ruling class.

It is disgraceful to confess it, but it doubtless is true, that after nineteen Christian centuries there is still a great disparagement between Jesus' ideals and the present way of the world, as the New Revelation of Jesus, particularly the discovery of the Social Gospel, and scientific sociology have disclosed. Without at all attempting here to detail the differences between the standards in the Sermon on the Mount and other teachings of Jesus and the common conceptions and practices of our day, calling for a sacrificial life on the part of the followers of Jesus, we may note briefly a few contrarinesses: The supremacy of the material over the spiritual appears to be as much marked to-day as ever it was. This may be due partly to the remarkable exploitation of nature by means of machinery, but the fact remains and must not be condoned. Fear and suspicion reign to-day in spite of all the progress in the stability of society and the methods of making life safe. This attitude prevails from the social relations of people in

the same neighborhood to international diplomacy. Mutual suspicion seems often to prevail over mutual trust. The amount of the expenditures for the creation of peace is insignificant in comparison with the budgets for preparation for war, revealing trust in force rather than in love and service. In spite of very notable advances recently, the profit motive overtopples the service motive in industry. Social distinctions and race prejudices contradict Jesus' ideal of universal brotherhood. While there is not as much theoretical atheism as in the world at Jesus' time, there probably is more atheism of the practical sort among those who live as if there were no God. Some conditions in the churches too call for prophetic work on the part of the ministry which may lead to the blessings of the reviled. When all is considered, possibly it may be seen that Jesus' gospel is about as revolutionary to-day as ever it was.

This vast difference between the ideals of Jesus and the barbarism of the present day which we call civilization surely calls for such prophetic leadership in the church and out of it as will require not only an understanding of Jesus and of our times, but for courage and readiness to sacrifice for the cause. The opinion is all too prevalent that it is just in

this matter of fearless consecration that the ministry is lacking at the present time. The ministry sometimes give the impression that they are seeking first of all the comforts of life. It is popularly believed outside the church that the ministry is in the employment of the privileged classes, and that they fear to offend those who employ them.

This popular opinion is wrong. It is nevertheless extremely unfortunate. It hinders the progress of the church and of the principles for which Jesus stands. Developments which we call progress have brought distressing confusion to the ministry as to men of other callings. New inventions have brought new problems. The sciences have rung the changes so fast that the layman in science has become bewildered. New problems from the relations of the neighborhood to the relations of the distant parts of the earth have called for new solutions. The ministry, like the rest, are in a maze and no signboards point the way. If some in the ministry seem to be beating time, and to be seeking the comforts, it is because they do not see the way to the Kingdom. Not all of them have a clear and all-compelling vision that calls them out of themselves to sacrificial service. For this they are not to be blamed. All they can do is to labor, to pray,

and to wait. Let him who has learned how to be thoroughly Christian in his own business or profession cast the first stone.

Yet the fact cannot be ignored that it is not only the unchurched populace who feel that the ministry is lacking in sacrificial devotion and moral courage. Some very careful observers have felt the same way about the failure of the ministry to meet the supreme test of courage and readiness to sacrifice. Professor Ellwood has stated the convictions of a scientific sociologist in very clear and frank language about this matter:

> Mere intelligence can never save the world. There is just one way in which the transition can be effected from our semipagan civilization to a true Christian civilization, and that is for members of the Christian Church, one here and one there at first and then the many following, to consecrate themselves, without any limit or reservations whatsoever, to the forwarding of the Christian cause. When the church develops a fully consecrated leadership and itself assumes the spiritual leadership of mankind the Christian cause will win out among men, but not till then.[6]

> I believe that it is here that the religious and moral leadership of our world at the present time peculiarly fails. Religious leaders have become too timid. They are afraid to show that divine recklessness which was shown by their Master. . . .

[6] C. A. Ellwood, *Christianity and Social Science*, p. 204.

As a people, we show unmistakable signs of a lack of moral courage in dealing with the great evils of our time. If religious leaders would, however, show more moral courage, the masses would readily enough fall into line.[7]

As long as prudence rather than the exalted mood of Christ dominates religious leaders, the church can do nothing great. Religious leadership of our time demands as much consecration, fearlessness, and readiness to sacrifice of us as it ever demanded of any men.[8]

The reply to this is that the ministry to-day is as ready for sacrificial service as ever in the history of the church, if they see anything worth sacrificing for, as many instances convincingly prove. Too often they are in a situation in a divided and competing church which is not challenging. The situation calls for enlightenment and for amelioration in the whole status of the church rather than for blame.

In almost every significant forward movement of the church, from the ancient times to the present, monasticism being an exception (if one may call it a forward movement—and we think we should), it has been the ministers of religion who have been the leaders. We call to mind Paul, Athanasius, Augustine, the

[7] *Op. cit.*, p. 200.
[8] *Op. cit.*, p. 205.

Scholastics, Savonarola, Huss, Wycliffe, Luther, Zwingli, Calvin, Knox, Wesley, Bushnell, and in our own generation scores of ministers who have led the church to changed views in science, biblical criticism, and industrial and social problems. There is every reason to believe that when the ministry catches the vision of the New Revelation of Jesus they will become the leaders into the New Renaissance.

25. The Challenge of Jesus to the Man of Affairs

By the discerning mind Jesus' religion is better understood now and more deeply appreciated than at any time in the history of Christendom, including the days of his active ministry on earth in the flesh. The nineteen centuries are commentaries on the Gospels. Even the misinterpretations of the gospel of Jesus in his own day and down the centuries, and the resulting consequences in human history are aids to our understanding of it. The lives of those who have caught the Spirit of Jesus and lived in his way are illustrations of the gospel truths. Historical study in the scientific spirit of absolute open-mindedness, honesty, and freedom from prejudice has cleared away much of the accumulated debris

of the pagan and heathen centuries and revealed to our astonished eyes the glory of Jesus, "glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." The mystical, theological Christ, who is in every man but in Jesus supremely, is more, not less, appreciated, but he no longer need be made to displace or obscure the person of Him who was on earth the supreme revelation of God and of man.

Not since mediæval times, when unfortunately Jesus was a stranger to a large extent, has there been so little obstruction in theory to the advance of the religion of Jesus. For the first time in five hundred years there is no necessary conflict between science and evangelical religion, philosophy and religion, psychology and religion, or Biblicism and religion. It is probably also true that at no time in five hundred years has there been a clearer conception of the necessity of religion if civilization is not to destroy itself either in deadly military conflict or by moral dry-rot. Not till the present generation did anyone ever understand Jesus' teaching that this is God's world and not the devil's, and that it is to be saved and not lost.

With the traditional view of human nature was correlated the notion of the present world as evil,

sharing the curse of man and doomed to destruction as he is. To escape from it was the aim of the serious-minded man. Salvation meant not the salvation of the world itself, its transformation into something better and holier, but release from it in order to enjoy the blessedness of another world altogether.

It was not a mere accident, nor was it due to the immaturity of civilization and the lack of sensibility to physical comfort that social service on a large scale was postponed to modern times. Rather it was due to an altogether different ideal, and an altogether different estimate of the present world.

Under these circumstances, modern science . . . was of course impossible.[9]

Not till our own time did the church ever know that there was such a thing as the "social gospel" to be applied to human relations. The Greek and Roman churches and some Protestant churches still consider it their mission to save individuals from the final destruction of the world. No one till recent times sensed the significance of Jesus' teaching that heaven and hell are here and now as well as there and hereafter, and that the life we now live should be of such quality that it becomes eternal. Doubtless it is true that never in the history of Christianity has the Orient so well understood Jesus, and never before had it oc-

[9] A. C. McGiffert, *Protestant Thought Before Kant*, pp. 4ff. Reprinted by permission of Charles Scribner's Sons.

curred to those peoples that they could have Jesus without "Christianity," for which, judging by some of its samples, they had no liking. It would seem that not in half a millennium were all the roads so clear for Jesus to march into the very heart of the world. It has been said recently that no one else is seriously contesting the right of Jesus to the affection of the peoples of the world. Bernard Shaw says that no one but Jesus came through the World War with an enhanced reputation. What hinders a great forward movement?

There are a few objections which it is necessary for us to consider briefly. Some of them are based, not on ignorance, but upon knowledge; however, we hope to show that the knowledge is only partial. One objection is that religion ever has been and still is a hindrance to progress. This is too large a subject for us to discuss here in detail. That religion ever has had and still has some deterring influence as well as stimulating effects on progress no unprejudiced man would deny. It would not be easy to substantiate the thesis that on the whole the effect of religion on progress has been deterrent; and yet it would be considerable of an undertaking to prove the contrary. Perhaps if the debate had to do only with Christian religion, it might not be

quite so difficult to show that, on the whole, it had contributed greatly to the progress of mankind. We should not forget that there are other desirable things besides progress. Perhaps it can be shown, as it certainly is the case, that in every instance when Christianity has been a hindrance to progress it has been because and in so far as it has departed from the religion of Jesus.

At once the mind turns to the Inquisition, which has been variously described as the "devil's best contrivance for keeping people in ignorance," the "sword drawn from the scabbard to slay learning," and the instrument used for "driving learning north of the Alps and the Pyrenees." Then the mind runs to the two large volumes on *The Warfare Between Science and Theology*, which show that it was not only in mediæval times and by the Roman Catholic Church, but in modern times and by Protestant churches that the scientists have been hounded by the church. It cannot be successfully denied that the warfare was between science and religion, for it was organized religious forces as well as individuals who strove to block the progress of modern science. That science has been one of the greatest factors of modern progress no intelligent person would for a moment deny.

One volume of the twelve very large volumes of *The Cambridge Modern History* is entitled "Wars of Religion." Not only the contents of this large book, but the very title is a severe condemnation of Christianity. In contrast with some of the peaceable religions of Asia Christianity has been called "religion of war."

It is too well known to need further defense that tyrannical thrones in Christendom have been strengthened and perpetuated all too long by the influence of the church. This is more largely true in the Eastern part of Christendom. In the recent debates in Parliament regarding the *Revised Prayer Book* it has been suggested that it was the daily prayers for the king that have done much to perpetuate the throne and that the omission of this section would be fraught with far-reaching significance. The Russian Revolution is correct in its diagnosis of the religion they had been taught as "the opiate of the people." The Christian doctrine of the "divine right of kings" and the duty of submission to "the powers that be as ordained of God," as well as the efforts of designing autocrats to center the hopes of people in the glories of the future kingdom, have had their deterring effect on the progress of civil liberty.

In nearly every country in Christendom religion has divided people into numerous groups, and thus has made for conflicts and diversities in place of unity and peace.

Todd, in his *Theories of Social Progress* (p. 428), says, "The church is oftener the follower than the leader in great moral and intellectual advances."[10] Professor Sumner says, "The church never was on the level of the better *mores* of any time. Every investigation which we make leads us not to the church as the inspirer and leader, but to the dissenting apostles of righteousness."[11]

It is not necessary to instance other untoward features of "Christianity." It is with a great sense of shame that we must confess to some degree of truth in these and many such condemnations of the church. It is still true, taken by and large, East and West, that the church is more concerned about snatching a few souls from the burning than saving the present world. The Greek Catholic, the Roman Catholic, and some Protestant churches assert that this is their task. Priestly religion has scarcely ever been forward-looking, and Christianity has been and still is largely a

[10] Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

[11] W. G. Sumner, *Folk Ways*, p. 224. Reprinted by permission of Ginn & Co., publishers.

priestly religion, not only Greek Catholic and Roman Catholic, but in some respects, as it should be, in Protestant Christianity as well. If the conservative nature of priestly religion is recognized, it becomes quite possible to guard it from its reactionary tendencies.

In reply one may note a few things by way of excusing the situation. Religion is naturally conservative, being a matter of feeling rather than of pure intellect. The church is a large, a very large, organization, and such organizations necessarily move slowly. There are large vested interests and heavy financial programs to carry out, affording a large degree of economic control by the well-to-do who are by virtue of their wealth pleased to have the *status quo* remain "status." Let him who bitterly blames put himself in a like situation!

The reply we wish to make to the charge that religion hinders rather than helps progress is that in the case of Christianity this is true and has ever been true only in so far as the religion has departed from the ideals and principles of Jesus. This is so evident that only to state the fact seems sufficient. No one can accuse Jesus of advocating war, or putting heretics to death, or of favoring the privileged few at the expense of the many. The church is here, and here to stay; the only way to keep

from continuing its opposition to progress is to bring it into harmony with the Spirit of Jesus.

After all is said, is it not true that the greatest hindrance to the progress of Jesus' gospel is the failure of those who profess it to live up to it? The age-long statement of the doctrine of justification by faith has instilled into our very marrow the feeling that when we have made a profession of our faith we have done all that needs to be done. Professor Cabot expresses concerning ethics what has been too largely the situation in religion for many centuries:

> I have never got over the shock of discovering that the men with whom I took Philosophy 4 under George Herbert Palmer as a Harvard undergraduate had no idea of bettering themselves, or changing their habits, or building up their own plan of life. They took ethics as "a part of general culture"—to find out what it was about, not with any practical aim concerning their own characters. This I abhorred and still abhor. When I accepted the chair of ethics I pledged myself to the adventure of trying to make men better themselves, the most unfashionable attempt, I suppose, in all the modern educational world.[12]

In addition to this "general-culture" attitude toward religion there has been a lurking suspicion that Jesus' religion is an ultimate ideal

[12] R. C. Cabot, *Adventures on the Borderlands of Ethics*, p. 99. Reprinted by permission of author.

to be realized in the life to come, and which it is well for us to sing about now and to hold before our eyes to keep us from straying too far from it, but which is impracticable in this world, so that it would be foolish to undertake to make it a working hypothesis. This attitude should not be too severely condemned. It is not altogether possible to live a Christian life in an unchristian society. It is possible to cast pearls before swine and be bowled over by them. There have been times and places when the spirit of Jesus would have been misunderstood for cowardice and weakness, and accordingly been contemned. In a brutal society it was well for a few choice souls to reveal the ideal and pay the supreme cost of doing so. It was not foolish, but noble and godlike for them deliberately to choose to "cast their pearls" and be "rent by the swine." They have been those who have lived vicariously and redemptively. They have kept the light burning which has illumined the "face of Jesus Christ." They have been the harbingers of the new day, the prophets who have been slain by the fathers whose sons have gilded the tombs. By no means are the "swine" all dead, but we do believe that sufficient progress has been made in civilization that pearls will be recognized now and appreciated.

The time is come when "these dead shall have died in vain" unless a great army of the followers of Jesus move out to take their place. Civilization has been so far humanized that there will not be "swine" enough in human nature to "rend" a great army of those who are willing to cast the "pearls of great price" by boldly declaring their allegiance to Jesus and to his way of life. This is the challenge of our times. The Orient more especially has thrown down the gauntlet at our feet. Will we accept the challenge? They have a right to say indignantly and ever so rudely (as they would not say it), "Put up or shut up"; either repudiate Jesus' way or begin to live it. Take Jesus seriously or leave him. Leave him to us as an Oriental dreamer and we shall make his dreams come true and send missionaries to teach you "Christians" how to live the gospel of Jesus. Can we longer ignore the challenge? Leaving some of our missionaries in China without the protection of gunboats is the beginning of taking up the challenge. Shall we stop there? Or is this a sign of the times?

Perhaps the greatest challenge to live Jesus' way comes from the confirmation of the truth and practicability of Jesus' ethical ideals by recent scientific sociology. Not only has the way been cleared to belief in Jesus' ethics and

religion by the change from hostility to co-operation between natural science and religion, but, as one might really expect, sociology, as a distinctly human science, is strongly confirming not merely the possibility of living according to Jesus' principles, but the necessity of doing so if civilization is not to revert to barbarism in the true anthropological sense of the word, which in a scientific age with marvelously effective implements will be largely self-destructive. Civilization and barbarism may be contrasted sharply in "black and white" for the sake of clearness as follows:

Barbarism

Isolated groups, tribalism
Distrust among groups
Mutual fear
Brutality
Competition among groups
Hunting, spoliation
Conflict

Civilization

Mutuality, universalism, solidarity
Mutual trust and confidence
Sense of security
Humanity
Co-operation
Earning, production
Peace

It is evident that we are still to no small extent in the barbarian stage of development. It will readily appear that whatever gains have been made over barbarism have been made by the incorporation of principles advocated by Jesus.

If we contrast Jesus' ideals with the paganism of his time, it will be seen that certain elements in present-day civilization are more largely an incarnation of the pagan spirit than that of Jesus:

Paganism

Despite and contempt of the lowly
Supremacy of material
Suppression of the many
Irresponsibility of the few
Gain
Self-centeredness
Rights

Jesus' Ideals

Honor and love for all
Supremacy of spirit
"Liberty and justice for all"
Greater obligations of privilege
Service
Brotherhood
Duties

There is no necessity of arguing the

superiority of the "civilization" and "Jesus-ideals" groups above. "For progress there are required generosity, idealism, and the spirit of self-sacrificing service. Of this creative love the care of parent to child is the simplest and most typical expression. Progress results when intelligence and energy are guided by the spirit of disinterested devotion—in the love of truth, in the love of constructive work, and above all, in the love of fellow men."[13]

These principles are the popularly professed ideals of our times. Our practices, however, are not in accordance with our avowed ideals. The challenge which the world is hurling at us is to practice what we preach. The necessity of spiritualizing modern life, if our civilization is to continue not only to advance but even to maintain its level, has been asserted so often that any further emphasis would be a work of supererogation. Material goods and resources of power have been put into the hands of men who must not longer continue in the hitherto not very dangerous spirit of irresponsibility. New motives for control and new methods of carrying on are absolutely essential to the preservation of our civilization. Whatever may become of formal, organized religion, religious

[13] B. H. Streeter, *Reality*, p. 145. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company, publishers.

idealism is our only hope. And this idealism must not be simply a matter of "general culture." It must be applied and by men in whose hands are the economic and political destinies of the world. Painters, sculptors, actors, teachers, preachers, must be largely responsible for the spiritual regeneration of the modern materialistic spirit; but men who know the technique must apply the principles of Jesus to the practical problems furnished by our top-heavy civilization. There are perhaps two main reasons remaining why we do not meet the challenge; first the material cost of the spiritual gain, at least in the immediate future; and, in the second place, because we do not quite believe in the practicability of our ideals.

There is no arguing the first point. There are now and there gives promise of being for some time to come some who will not be willing to pay the price of discipline. About the second point we should like to make a few observations, following out the suggestion above that perhaps the greatest challenge to live Jesus' way comes from the confirmation of the truth and practicability of Jesus' ideals by recent scientific sociology.

In the first place a great stumbling-block in the path of religion has been removed by the

discovery that human nature so far from being unchangeable is most plastic. Paul and Augustine are largely responsible for the view that human nature is rotten, and that if man is to be saved, it must in most cases be by fiat, or substitutionary processes, rather than by appealing to and strengthening the better tendencies in human nature itself. Hobbes' view that the natural state of man was the war of all against all, and the teaching of a certain school of evolutionists who forgot or neglected some very significant things which Darwin said in his *Descent of Man*, and saw nature "red in tooth and claw," accentuated and perpetuated Paul's mistaken notion of the natural man. If human nature were what these persons suppose, Christianity would indeed be impracticable, for reforms contrary to human nature are futile. The plasticity of human nature is being proved by the investigations of scientifically minded historians, anthropologists, psychologists and sociologists. That the child is largely ego-centric does not necessarily argue that the adult must be also, with perhaps some reasonable modifications of his selfishness, such as adding a little indirectness which he finds more effective than always going straight after what he wants. Human nature is not some unchangeable substance like protoplasm. It is

not quite so certain now that protoplasm is incapable of being modified. Heredity by no means is being minimized, but it is now recognized that there are a possible saint and a possible sinner in practically every normal human being that comes into the world. Human nature is a complex of unlearned tendencies, instinctive impulses and feelings, together with reason, and the ideals communicated consciously by parents and teachers and unconsciously by the *mores* of the group. What is called for is not the condemnation of human nature nor the condoning of it as hopeless, but appeal to its better aspects—to the native altruistic instincts. The sciences and arts of sociology and religious education are based on the theory that human nature can be molded very largely according to the heart's desire. Failure to bring to the fore in any given life the "better nature" is due largely to the lack of ideals or of skill on the part of the persons who are responsible. "Human nature is not a fixed quantity. It is infinitely diverse and infinitely malleable; infinitely sensitive to change."[14] "The true evolutionist must believe that neither human nature nor man's environment is a fixed quantity."[15] "The studies

[14] A. J. Todd, *Theories of Social Progress*, p. 46. Reprinted by permission of The Macmillan Company.

[15] Todd, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

among all peoples of the world by anthropologists and sociologists show human nature to be one of the most modifiable things we know."[16]

As to structure, human nature is undoubtedly the most plastic part of the living world, the most adaptable, the most educable. Of all animals it is man to whom heredity counts for least and conscious building forces for most. Consider that his infancy is longest; his brain most unfinished at birth, his powers of habit-making and habit-changing most marked, his susceptibility to social impressions keenest—and it becomes clear that in every way nature, as a prescriptive power, has provided in him for her own displacement.

To anyone who asserts as a dogma that "human nature never changes" it is fair to reply, "It is human nature to change itself."[17]

If the ideals of Jesus were contrary to human nature, the process of remaking human nature would be discouraging in spite of the fact of its plasticity, but there are in human nature rudimentary forms of the high ideals. Darwin, Kropatkin, Henry Drummond, and many others since, have called attention to the struggle for the survival of others. Struggle for food is an expression of the instinct of self-preservation; but the struggle for procreation is often at

[16] C. A. Ellwood, *Christianity and Social Science*, p. 13.
[17] W. E. Hocking, *Human Nature and Its Remaking*, p. 10. Reprinted by permission of Yale University Press.

the expense of the survival of self, while it leads to the continued existence of the species. In some insects, procreation means death for the male. If a species should produce a generation of mothers without parental instinct, it would mean the death of the species. The gregarious instinct leads to the preservation of the herd.

It would seem that we are without any further excuse for not following Jesus' way of living. Many a John the Baptist in natural science, philosophy, psychology, biblical criticism, and theology has prepared the way, exalting the valleys, leveling down the mountains and making the rough ways plain, till there is no necessary contradiction between modern culture and religion; but again, as in the ancient times, the religious explanation of the universe is the best interpretation of it.

Not only are we without excuse, but the times demand that we ally ourselves with Jesus. The war is on, and it behooves us to cease our neutrality. On the one side are race prejudices, the cult of nationalism, worship of wealth and worldly success, and false naturalism which degrades man into merely an intelligent beast, all allied for the corruption of morals, the dissolution of the home, the destruction of the church by neglect, and finally the destruc-

tion of our civilization by war or by moral decay.

In too nearly a neutral position stands organized Christianity. It has not prevented contempt for backward races, the exploitation of peoples, the worship of wealth; it has not entirely saved the home; it has not prevented war between Christian nations; nor even kept the peace between capital and labor. It has not prevented the progressive secularization of social institutions, and even of life itself.

On the other side stands the lowly Nazarene, clad only in the seamless robe, wielding only the power of the loving spirit, crying, "Follow me"; in the spirit of good will choose the welfare of every race and of every individual man; use the wealth of the world and your own personal resources and abilities for human service; reverence every man as a possible son of the heavenly Father. He is pleading, this "strong son of God": "You say that at the heart of the universe is a God loving and serving like me; you say to me, 'Our truest, holiest manhood, thou.' Oh, give it not your intellectual assent alone, but believe it in your hearts; let your hearts 'leap up' in response to these truths till, energized by glowing holy emotions, you rejoice to live my Way, and make your life redemptive."

A great deal of progress has been made in Christianizing the world, but it is only a beginning. Our civilization is still largely not merely pagan, but barbarian to a large degree. It may be the task of the scholar to discover truth and the function of the preacher to proclaim it; but it devolves finally upon the man of affairs to incorporate it into the life of the world. Too often those who have not the technique, but whose only qualification is their zeal for the saving of the world, have undertaken to dictate to those who have the technique the method of the application of the principles of right living to world problems. This has been a great hindrance, for it has done more than anything else probably to give the impression that Jesus' principles are not practical.

While the responsibility of conducting local and interdenominational church affairs in accordance with the spirit of Jesus and of bringing the church as a whole into harmony with Jesus' ideals devolves primarily upon the ministerial leadership of the church, it is upon the leaders in industry in friendly conference with their employees that the responsibility falls of bringing industry into the service of man instead of exploiting humanity. Like responsibility rests upon leaders in social life, in education, in commerce, in politics, in

diplomacy, and in all human activities, to make their chief concern not the acquisition of power, the making of money, the attainment of privilege or fame for its own sake, or national aggrandizement or racial supremacy, but, rather, to make their supreme object the welfare of humanity and the progress of man. Is it not certain that such a happy consummation will not eventuate unless people are willing to expose themselves to the transforming power of some such idealism as that of Jesus? Nothing else is quite so important in all the world's affairs now as just this. The newly revealed Jesus is saying again in terms far more intelligible than ever before, "Come unto me and live."

26. Jesus' Challenge to Follow His Method

Unrighteous methods may sometimes apparently succeed in accomplishing righteous ends, but in the long run they defeat their purpose. To employ unrighteousness even for a good purpose is to add to rather than to lessen the sum total of unrighteousness. To fight fire with fire may be necessary in a conflagration, but the analogy does not hold good in human affairs. Even in the physical realm it is often dangerous and it is always expensive.

It is the last resort with a nonrational element. To catch a thief does necessitate knowledge of the ways of thieves, but it does not "take a thief to catch a thief."

The most rudimentary knowledge of psychology, or of human nature, leads one to recognize that wrath provokes wrath, brutality brutality, and that gentleness and kindness also beget their sort. That "a soft answer turneth away wrath" is as true to-day, if not more so, than in the time of Solomon; and Paul's exhortation, "Overcome evil with good," is still excellent advice. Stinginess is best overcome by generosity; but to deal niggardly with the stingy man is to make him more so. It is extremely important that parents, teachers, and all who have to do with children and young people, and employers too, should recognize that, while undue temptation should not be allowed to present itself, suspicion and distrust are demoralizing, and that trust calls out trustworthiness.

In connection with this consideration it is well to remember that these principles which are applicable in individual cases are all the more true when groups are concerned. The psychology of the crowd reveals the fact that the group is more amenable to suggestion than is the individual. The purely rational is less manifested by the crowd, and the emotional is

much more in evidence; the crowd is therefore much more unstable than the individual and much more open to suggestion. It is just this trait of the crowd which affords the unscrupulous demagogue his opportunity. By a pretense of zeal for righteousness he can sway the crowd to the most unrighteous sort of procedure. While in the long run the honest man who has regard for his statements may win out, in the meantime much mischief can be done. People in the mass can be brutalized or moved to high idealism more readily than can the individual. This is but another way of saying that with groups as with individuals generosity begets generosity, friendliness its kind, and also suspicion and distrust engender their like. In the case of groups as with individuals distrust cannot bring about confidence, selfishness beget generosity, contempt win respect, or war bring anything more than truce; it requires other means to establish peace.

Jesus anticipated the discovery of this truth by nineteen hundred years. Evidently it seemed to him extremely important. To make it clear and to emphasize it he used some very strong language: Give to every one who asks; do double the impressed service by going an extra mile; offer the other cheek; resist not him that is evil; do not retaliate; pray for your

tormentor; love your enemies; grapes do not grow on the thorn, nor figs on thistles; as you measure it will be measured unto you; as you judge you will be judged—different ways of saying that like begets like, and that good cannot be done with evil means.

Perhaps it is the occasional, immediate good, which sometimes results from the employment of bad means, which has made the world so slow to realize the truth of Jesus' teaching on this point. Many business men think that competition is better than co-operation. Some employers still believe that they can fight their employees and get good service from them. Some employees do not yet seem to understand that their interests are bound up with those of the employer. Wardens of some penitentiaries still carry on as if they thought that they could reform men by brutal means. Some States still murder murderers in the futile attempt to cure the evils of murder. There are still some parts of the world where it is thought that servants are made more serviceable by keeping them servile. Nations still believe that they may win the loyalty of colonies by exploiting them; that they can live in constant mutual distrust and suspicion and still gain confidence and a sense of security; that they may prepare for war and get peace.

It would be well for churches and all ecclesiastical organizations, for reformers and all persons engaged in humanitarian service, to remember that in the long run methods which accord with avowed aims will best bring about the desired results. Church extension boards have been known to employ very unworthy means. Reformers have sometimes played dirty politics in order to accomplish their purposes. Organizations for charity and for the propagation of the faith have not always noticed the "taint" on money contributed. If the temptation is strong to use unworthy methods of obtaining worthy ends, it might be well to recall to mind the fact that Jesus himself was very sorely tempted once and again on this very matter. In his baptism Jesus became conscious of a call to devote himself from that time wholly to the task of establishing the kingdom of God. Just what the nature of the Kingdom was to be possibly he hardly yet fully visualized. However much it might be of this world and political, it was to be righteous, unselfish, spiritual. The forty days' temptation in the wilderness was largely with reference to the method to be employed in the establishment of the Kingdom. Jesus came out of the forty days' mental and moral struggle with a decision against both the traditional con-

ception of the nature of the Kingdom and against the methods which it was commonly supposed would have to be employed for its realization. Nineteen hundred years ago Jesus came to the conclusion, which some choice minds are coming to to-day with much agony, that military conquest is of the devil and that it does not forward the interests of humanity, but that it defeats universal brotherhood. He decided not only that consciences cannot be coerced, but that loyalty cannot be purchased with loaves. He came to the conclusion that it is not possible to astonish people into the Kingdom with spectacular displays. And so he chose an entirely different method—one in harmony with his ultimate purposes. Once and again he was tempted to turn aside from it to methods approved at the time, but as often he held himself to his course, though not without misgivings and always with great struggle.

When John the Baptist saw the inside of a prison instead of the Messianic kingdom, and was daily expecting death, he sent to Jesus to inquire if he were really the Messiah. Jesus did not answer either Yes or No, but sent to the one who had heralded him as Messiah an account of his loving service and humble preaching of glad tidings even to the poor, as

much as to say: "If John understands the nature of the Kingdom, he will understand my method and will know that I am the Christ, but if he does not know the nature of the Kingdom, he will not understand what I am about." Peter also sorely tempted Jesus, who with great effort was holding himself to his course, when Peter indignantly rejected sacrificial suffering as unworthy of the Messiah. Similar thoughts must have disturbed Jesus' mind and contributed not a little to the agony of Gethsemane.

There may have been times and places when Jesus' method of meeting brutality with kindness might have been misunderstood for cowardice and effeminacy; but it is so no longer when used in the right spirit. However, the effectiveness of Jesus' method depends largely upon the character of the person or the group employing it. Strength may successfully use this gentler way of conciliation, but weakness will much more likely be despised in the attempt. The undoubtedly courageous may accomplish much more by the method than by its opposite; not so the timid. Jesus' way of meeting and overcoming calumny, abuse, brutality, selfishness, injustice, and other evils calls for strength, courage, generosity beyond strict justice, love, and readiness for sacrificial and unappreciated service. His method will fail and that con-

temptuously when employed by individuals or groups who are unwilling to live Jesus' kind of life, or who, though willing, too largely fail.

It would seem that Providence has brought America into a situation which makes it possible for her to seize the moral leadership of the world and lead the way to a new era in international relations. She attempted the leadership at Versailles a decade since, but because of sordid selfish fears in Europe and of petty politics and provincial conservatism at home, the attempt failed, and that so sadly that for a time America was thought to be hypocritical in her pretended moral idealism. Some good results remained, however, notably the League of Nations itself. The unfortunate strictly "business" attitude of our government in foreign loans settlements also stands in our way of leadership. Doubtless some raids on our well-filled treasury have been attempted by impoverished nations, but on the whole, Europe views the loans in a different light from our purely business way of thinking about them.

In spite of these very unfortunate setbacks, America is still one of the nations upon whom chiefly the weight of responsibility rests of attempting Jesus' way in handling international relations. America is strong; there

can be no doubt about it. Her natural resources are very large. Her ability to turn her enormous man-power into a war machine almost overnight astonished the world, as did the terrible dash of her "devil hounds" in battle. America is generous. If her diplomacy has too often been of the dollar variety, it has been at the dictation of special interests which are powerful politically. But the heart of America is generous, as is shown by the many millions contributed for the relief of suffering and the rebuilding of the world after the Great War. Even her diplomacy has been generous in some instances, particularly in her dealings with China. But mainly because of her strength it devolves upon America to propose other ways than by force to settle international differences, and in general to inaugurate a new era in diplomacy. If she tried Jesus' way, no doubt she would be misunderstood at least for a time. Beyond doubt she would make the attempt at considerable cost. But in the end it would result in material gain for her as well as in untold blessing for mankind. Should America refuse to undertake her destined place of moral leadership of the world (which may God forbid), not only will this planet be a somewhat less pleasant place in which to live, but America herself will lose her soul, and moral disintegra-

tion will set in at the foundations of her civilization.

The youth so full of enthusiasm and zest and yearning for high conquest needs some shining ideal toward which to steer his car, else he will run amuck. The business man, money mad and jazz jaded, down in his heart is longing for a more worthy and meaningful task. The society woman, "seeking change for sake of change," earnestly looks for new worlds to conquer which are worthy of the tasking. The church is in danger of disintegrating for lack of an organizing principle. She needs new ideals, new stimulating enthusiasms, a new message, and a new vision of her mission. The challenge is hurled to each and to all by the New Revelation of the gospel of Jesus. It comes now clarified by historical biblical scholarship, fortified by the teachings of science and psychology, and demanded by scientific sociology. It challenges every one of us to live by the ideals that made Jesus great. It challenges us to the inspiring task of making the world over after the pattern of the Sermon on the Mount. Jesus is challenging us individually to live lovingly, sacrificially, and joyously. He challenges us collectively to reclaim the home, to induce the church to believe Jesus; to make business, industry, and the professions means

of serving humanity; to provide places for children to play instead of slaying them in the streets; to provide adults wholesome places of entertainment instead of turning over the important matter of amusement to unregulated commercialized institutions; to clean up and make sweet and beautiful the disgracefully dirty and ugly parts of our great cities; to make village life wholesome; to make the farm attractive and farm life interesting and developing; to provide news which is not lies and is not debasing; to see that no man of whatever race or color is despised unless he is despicable; to save society from snobbishness on the one hand and from equally narrowing loneliness on the other; to make the "sisterhood of nations" a reality instead of an hypocrisy; to eliminate war, the greatest scourge of humanity—in a word, to finish the task begun by Jesus of bringing in the kingdom of God.

By the New Revelation of him in the one-hundred-and-fifty-year research, Jesus has been born again in our time. Our decision what to do with him is an exceedingly serious matter. When he came before, his own nation rejected him, and in doing so rejected its destiny. For us individuals to reject him is to lose our own better selves. For us to reject him collectively is to invite the doom which far-seeing states-

men and philosophers are predicting of our civilization. To receive him is to divert the doom and to enter upon the most marvelous age in history. Our civilization stands perilously near the parting of the ways of life and of death. The next quarter-century is terrifyingly crucial. Nothing should be allowed to stand in the way of a clear vision of the far-reaching consequences of this choice. Anyone who permits a petty prejudice or a temporary personal advantage to tip the balance the wrong way will be guilty of treason to humanity. The challenge makes every one who hears it either worse or better, according as he refuses its implications or rises to the vision and invests his life in its realization. The challenge is a very ancient one and yet it is ever new. It has come to our generation with peculiar clearness, and because of our situation in America it has come to us with unusual urgency. It may be summed up tersely in the phrase, "self or service." The new understanding of Jesus' life and teaching enables us to see that the alternative "self or service" is not real, for self is realized in service both in the case of individuals, and, as we are now able to understand, in the case of nations as well. No more clear and stirring challenge has ever come to any age than that flung now to the statesman,

the professional man, the business man, the educator, the religious leader, and to the Church of Jesus Christ. "Arise, shine, for thy light is come." "Even so come, Lord Jesus," into the life of the world.

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